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ABSTRACT

The basic aim of this report is to suggest a strategic framework for the transformation of manpower placement services (MPS) from a reactive, precarious organization into an active and vital service delivery system. The main characteristics of MPS are analyzed from a systems perspective and organizational resources and structure of services for the hard to employ are surveyed. It is pointed out that, following the systems perspective, changes in the supportive subsystem will not produce immediate results in the service patterns but that new operative goals and service technology are needed for both clients and employers. The basic change strategy should be to expand the operative goals of the agency with the twofold aim of improving its services and increasing its importance in the community. An intelligence system is proposed which would fulfill three related functions: to monitor the external relevant environment of the agency, to provide an internal audit of staff and client activities, and to evaluate the agency's outputs. The effectiveness of MPS is dependent upon its ability to develop a multilevel service delivery system that breaks away from the narrow conception of matching persons with jobs. (Author/SA)

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MANPOWER PLACEMENT: SERVICE DELIVERY FOR THE HARD-TO-EMPLOY

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POLICY PAPERS IN HUMAN RESOURCES
AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS 21

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School of Social Work
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INSTITUTE OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
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MANPOWER PLACEMENT: SERVICE DELIVERY FOR THE HARD-TO-EMPLOY

1

Introduction

My objective in the following study will be to identify some of the key parameters that affect the operations of manpower placement services (MPS) and to propose a new service delivery system for these agencies. Caught in the midst of rapid changes and developments in manpower policies and programs during the sixties, the public employment placement services were pressured to undertake new functions, serve new publics, and develop radically different placement methods. This was a result of the critical location of MPS in the emergence of a network of complex and often disjointed manpower programs. The employment service has been given the function of recruiting clients for the new manpower programs and processing the graduates of these programs. With the changes and developments in these areas, MPS became one of the main bottlenecks and sources of discontent in the efforts to implement new manpower policies. It is important, therefore, that we briefly outline the changing context in which the employment service has had to function and how change has affected the objectives and operations of the agency.

The 1960s were characterized by the emergence of large scale federally supported manpower programs for the training and employment of the disadvantaged and hard-to-employ. Levitan and Mangum (1969) estimate that by 1968 federal funds for these programs were in excess of $2 billion, a ninefold increase since 1961. Several related factors gave the impetus to these developments. First, the persistence of large "pockets of unemployment" became obvious, even during periods of economic prosperity, with unemployment rates of 5 and 6 percent. It was evident that such unemployment rates could not be reduced through the processes of the market economy without the intervention of the federal government.

Second, with the rise of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s came demands by Blacks and other deprived minorities to open up economic and employment opportunities from which they have been excluded. These demands focused not only on having equal employment opportunities, but on developing programs that would enable the deprived minorities to improve their level of education, employment, and housing. The Civil Rights Movement rapidly turned the nation's attention to the fact that those suffering most from persistent unemployment and underemployment were the Blacks, the residents of urban ghettos, and the rural poor.

Third, the Civil Rights Movement has led to a rediscovery of poverty in the midst of affluence. Strong political as well as moral pressures were brought to bear on the federal government to undertake concrete programs to eliminate such causes of poverty as lack of education, unemployment, and poor health. These pressures were significantly reinforced by the spread of civil unrest in the nation's cities, particularly the riots that broke out in scores of urban slums.

A significant change in orientation has taken place, therefore, in the formulation of manpower policies. The explicit goal for many new manpower programs was to reach the hard-to-employ and make them the target for employment services. As Levitan and Mangum (1969: 8-9) put it, "No longer is the emphasis on matching the best man with an existing job, but on providing a suitable job for each man or equipping the man to fill a suitable job." This shift in manpower policy has not occurred in a systematic or coherent manner. Instead, programs were developed piecemeal, often with little continuity and coordination among them. It has been a process of "muddling through" in which individual pro-

grams for various social groups were developed as specific needs and pressures became acute and were changed or augmented when they failed to resolve unemployment problems. Table 1 lists the major federal manpower programs that have been developed in the 1960s, their legislative authorization, and administering agencies. The table clearly indicates the plethora of manpower programs authorized under numerous legislative acts and amendments to meet the needs of diverse social groups.

In the early 1960s federal efforts to deal with critical unemployment problems were quite minimal. With the passage of Area Redevelopment Act (ARA) and Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA), early efforts were aimed at retraining of technologically displaced workers, which actually meant training workers for existing jobs. As a result, these programs were geared only minimally to the hard-to-employ.

In 1963 and 1964, however, the attention shifted to youth unemployment and the expansion of the youth component of MDTA. This came as a partial response to the fact that a large number of young people, approximately 40 percent of the 16-20 age group in 1963, were dropouts from the school system and, as a result, lacked the elementary skills necessary for holding a meaningful job. The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 established the Neighborhood Youth Corps and the Job Corps as additional programs designed to provide disadvantaged youth with basic work skills.

The "war on poverty" has produced a new orientation as well as new manpower programs. Emphasis has shifted to meet the employment needs of the disadvantaged workers, who were residents of urban ghettos and were unemployed or underemployed most of their work lives. These were workers, labeled as hard-to-employ, who clearly needed very intensive employment and other supportive services to become gainfully employed. For them, traditional manpower services were obviously inadequate. Most of the Community Action Program (CAP) projects were designated, therefore, for the employment and training of the hard-to-employ, along with supportive services such as medical care, legal aid, and remedial education. The Economic Opportunity Act also expanded training and employment programs for employable persons who were on public assistance. The Community Work and Training Programs, with a budget of over $100 million in 1965, were aimed at the development of training and work experience slots for employable

Table 1.

*Federally Assisted Manpower Training and Support Programs**

Program title and date started	*Legislative authorization (source of funds)*	*Administering agencies*	*Services provided and groups served*
Adult Basic Education (ABE), 1964	Adult Basic Education Act of 1966. (Initially, Economic Opportunity Act of 1964)	Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; Office of Education (through grants to state and local educational systems)	Provides basic education in classroom setting for persons 16 years of age and older with less than eighth-grade achievement.
Community Action Program (CAP), late 1964	Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (Title II)	Office of Economic Opportunity	Provides human resource development services, including manpower and related services and adult basic education, for persons below the poverty level (18 yrs of age and over for basic education).
Concentrated Employment Program (CEP), May 1967	Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 and Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962	Department of Labor. (Local prime sponsors are usually Community Action Agencies.)	Provides a coordinated program of manpower and supportive services for hard-core unemployed youth and adults in selected areas where they are concentrated.
Job Corps, January 1965	Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (Title IA)	Office of Economic Opportunity until delegated to Department of Labor, July 1, 1969	Assist low-income disadvantaged youth 16 to 21 years of age who require a change of environment to profit from training to become more responsible, employable, and

Table 1 (cont.).

			productive citizens through a residential program of intensive education, skill training, and related services.
Job Opportunities in the Business Sector (JOBS), March 1968	Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962 (Title II) and Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (Title IB)	Cooperative arrangement between Department of Labor and National Alliance of Businessmen (NAB)	Encourages private industry to hire, train, retain, and upgrade hard-core unemployed and underemployed 18 yrs of age and over. Initially limited to major metropolitan areas but expanding to nationwide basis in fiscal 1970.
MDTA institutional training, August 1962	Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962 (Title II)	Department of Labor; Department of Health, Education, and Welfare	Provides occupational training or retraining in a classroom setting for unemployed and underemployed persons 16 years of age and over; at least two-thirds of them disadvantaged. Eligible persons receive training, subsistence, and transportation allowances.
MDTA on-the-job training (OJT), August 1962	Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962 (Title II)	Department of Labor; Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, when	Provides instruction combined with supervised work at the jobsite, under contracts with

Table 1 (cont.).

		projects include related classroom instruction	public and private employers, for unemployed and underemployed persons 16 years of age and over, at least two-thirds of them disadvantaged. Preference given to persons at least 18 years of age.
Neighborhood Youth Corps (NYC): in-school, summer, and out-of-school programs, January 1965	Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (Title IB)	Department of Labor	Encourages disadvantaged youth of high school age (14 to 21) to continue in or return to school by providing paid work experience. Emphasis shifting to job preparation, especially in out-of-school program. New design for out-of-school program limited to 16- and 17-year-old drop-outs.
New Careers, first half of 1967 (to be absorbed by Public Service Careers Program during fiscal 1970)	Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (Title IB) as amended in 1966	Department of Labor	Prepares disadvantaged adults and out-of-school youth for careers in human service fields (e.g. health and education through work experience, education, and training).

Table 1 (cont.).

Operation Mainstream, December 1965	Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (Title IB) as amended in 1965	Department of Labor	Provides counseling, basic education, and work experience for chronically unemployed adults in newly created jobs in community betterment and beautification, mainly in rural areas.
Public Service Careers (PSC), early in 1970	Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (Title IB) as amended in 1966 and Manpower Development Training Act of 1962 (Title II)	Department of Labor	Secures, within merit principles, permanent employment in public service agencies of disadvantaged, unemployed youth and adults, and stimulates upgrading of current employees, thereby meeting public sector manpower needs.
Special Impact, first half of 1968	Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (Title ID) as amended in 1966 and 1967	Office of Economic Opportunity (delegated to Department of Labor prior to July 1969)	Provides manpower training as a component of economic and community development for poor and unemployed persons in selected urban poverty areas.
Vocational Education, 1917	Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 (substantially amended in	Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; Of-	Provides vocational training, primarily in a classroom set-

Table 1 (cont.).

	1946) and Vocational Education Act of 1963 (substantially amended in 1968)	fice of Education (through grants to state school systems)	ting, full or part time, for youths and adults, in or out of regular public schools. New emphasis on the poor and disadvantaged.
Vocational Rehabilitation, 1920	Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1920 (substantially amended in 1943, 1954, 1965, and 1968)	Department of Health, Education, and Welfare	Provides intensive rehabilitation services to enable youth and adults who are physically or mentally handicapped to obtain jobs commensurate with their maximum capabilities.
Work Incentive (WIN), first half of 1968. (Replaced Work-Experience and Training Program under the EOA, Title V, which operated from 1965 into fiscal 1969.)	Social Security Act of 1935 (Title IVC) as amended in 1967	Department of Labor. (Department of Health, Education, and Welfare is responsible for referral of enrollees and for furnishing social services during enrollment.)	Provides work, training, child care, and related services designed to move into productive employment employable persons on rolls of the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and AFDC-Unemployed Parents programs.

* Includes primarily those federal programs aimed at assisting the unemployed and the poor to obtain satisfactory employment, which were based on legislations enacted in the 1960s.

Source: Manpower Report to the President, 1970.

persons on public assistance, with the objective of getting them off the welfare rolls.

In 1966 the "New Careers" and "Special Impact" amendments to the Economic Opportunity Act emphasized the creation of training opportunities and jobs in areas of concentrated poverty. Creation and development of jobs specifically structured to meet the needs of the disadvantaged was considered the solution to their persistent problems with unemployment. By strengthening the on-the-job training (OJT) component, a similar shift took place in MDTA, thereby encouraging employers to hire disadvantaged workers by subsidizing the costs of their on-the-job training. The 1966 MDTA amendments resulted in the decision to direct 95 percent of the entire MDTA training efforts to serving the hard-to-employ.

This period (1964-1966) was also characterized by a rapid rise in experimental and demonstration manpower programs attempting to develop new techniques to reach and serve disadvantaged workers. The most successful of these projects became models for many federally funded programs that followed. In 1964, the Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC) opened up in Philadelphia, demonstrating that strong linkages with the local business community to create jobs for the hard-to-employ is a prerequisite for an effective training and placement program. JOBS NOW was launched in 1966 in Chicago and demonstrated again that, with active cooperation of employers, usual hiring standards, often discriminating against the poor, could be dropped. JOBS NOW also introduced the concept of a "team" approach, which included a job developer, an employment placement worker, and a job coach working together to provide intensive services to each client.

In 1967 and 1968 two approaches toward the development of manpower services for the hard-to-employ crystallized. First, more systematic efforts were made to induce employers to develop jobs and hire disadvantaged workers. Second, interdepartmental programs were launched to provide an integrated and intensive array of manpower services to designated areas having a high concentration of hard-to-employ workers. The Concentrated Employment Program (CEP) combined these two approaches. In 1967 nearly $100 million allocated to MDTA, NYC, New Careers, and Special Impact were earmarked for CEP projects in 19 inner-city slum areas.

Concomitantly, greater efforts were made to involve the business

community in the efforts to train and employ disadvantaged workers. In 1968 the government launched an ambitious program of providing jobs in private industry for 500,000 hard-to-employ during the next three years. Job Opportunities in the Business Sector (JOBS) committed $150 million in that year to subsidize the hiring of disadvantaged workers in private industry and cover the costs of their training. At the same time, there was a significant move toward national OJT contracts with such organizations as the National Association of Home Builders, the National Tool, Die, and Precision Machinery Association, and the United Brotherhood of Carpenters.

Rising welfare costs and discontent in the administration of welfare programs also brought a change in the Community Work and Training programs initiated under the Economic Opportunity Act. The 1967 amendments to the Social Security Act shifted the program to the Department of Labor and increased the incentives for welfare recipients to accept training and employment. The new Work Incentive Program (WIN) enabled recipients to retain a considerable portion of their earnings without subtraction from their welfare benefits. $10 million were provided for WIN in 1968 to fund 8,200 enrollments.

The 1960s came to a close with a certain sense of disillusion about the various manpower programs. Several factors may account for this. First, with the slowdown of the economy and rise in the rate of unemployment, from 3.5 percent in 1969 to 5.9 in 1971, manpower programs that depended on private industry for training and jobs for the hard-to-employ lost many of their manpower resources. Second, the vast array of manpower programs that emerged in the decade were not developed in any systematic or coordinated manner. They failed to follow a clear, overall manpower policy and, as a result, tended to be fragmented, ill-coordinated, and often in competition with each other. Third, each individual program encountered various administrative problems in terms of defining clear program objectives, developing a viable service technology, and establishing an accountable administrative structure.

In response to these problems, efforts were made to consolidate most manpower programs under Department of Labor auspices. Table 2 indicates the array of manpower programs currently funded by that department. Individual programs have undergone evaluation and reorganization. In 1969 CEP was redesigned to give the

employment service agencies the responsibility of delivering services. Both the Job Corps and Neighborhood Youth Corps were reorganized. In all programs greater emphasis was placed on monitoring staff activities and on administrative accountability. To a large extent, manpower programs have entered a period of developmental slowdown, evaluation, and reflection about their effectiveness and efficiency.

Nonetheless, the reorientation toward client-centered services has resulted in the formulation of four basic concepts in manpower services that are likely to guide agencies in the future. (Haber, 1967):

1. *Outreach:* The program needs to initiate and establish contacts with its clients and to bring the program to them.
2. *Job readiness:* The agency must provide the hard-to-employ with an intensive array of services tailored to their individual needs in order to prepare them for a job.
3. *Job development:* The agency must develop jobs that are sensitive to the needs and problems of the hard-to-employ.
4. *Inter-agency coordination:* A concentrated effort to serve the hard-to-employ must be based on systematic coordination of all the local agencies whose services are crucial to the client's needs.

Table 2.

Federal Funds Obligated to Programs Administered by the Department of Labor in 1971
(in thousands of dollars)

Program	*Obligated Funds*
Manpower Development and Training Act	
Institutional training	$263,936*
JOP—OJT	60,285
Part-time and others	11,531
NYC	
in school	58,052
out of school	111,195
summer	253,206
Operation Mainstream—New Careers	71,550
Public Service Careers	91,636
CEP	166,752
JOBS	169,051
WIN	64,085
Job Corps	160,187

* Excluding funds for supportive services.

Source: U.S. Department of Labor.

What effects did these trends have on MPS? The proliferation of manpower programs and the reorientation of manpower policies have resulted in tremendous pressures for change in the agency. First, MPS was called upon to either administer or take an active part in the implementation of many new programs like MDTA and CEP. Second, MPS was assigned the role of identifying, recruiting, and referring the hard-to-employ to the various manpower programs. Third, the agency was asked to provide job placements as well as supportive services to the graduates of these programs. Fourth, MPS was directed to become the focal manpower center in the local community to coordinate various manpower services and establish linkages with other community services. Finally, MPS encountered serious challenges to its mandate from other manpower programs employing seemingly more successful placement techniques.

Both the existing and planned manpower placement offices lacked the knowledge and the expertise to adequately serve disadvantaged workers. Moreover, the poor in general and the disadvantaged minorities in particular perceived MPS as discriminatory and non-responsive to their needs. The past practice of measuring success by the number of applicants placed in jobs resulted in preference for applicants with "good" employment potentials over disadvantaged workers (Blau, 1963). This pattern was further reinforced by the fact that until the 1960s, MPS concentrated on the employment needs of business and industry rather than clients. As a result, disadvantaged workers felt alienated from these agencies. Any new efforts to reach potential clients required a drastic change of image, backed by active programs to reach out and serve disadvantaged workers.

Briefly, several key developments in the efforts of the employment placement services to change their orientation can be identified during the 1960s.

1. The Manpower Development and Training Act, passed in 1962, designated the employment service as the agency in charge of recruiting and selecting appropriate applicants for the various MDTA training programs. Nevertheless, MPS was still criticized for "creaming" the best of the unemployed for training.

2. In 1964 plans were initiated to open Youth Opportunity Centers (YOC) in the major urban centers to provide special employment counseling to disadvantaged youth, and special training programs were organized for youth counselors to be employed in

these centers. Among the activities of the YOC were referrals to NYC and the Job Corps, development of employment opportunities for youth, and counseling services.

3. The passage of the Economic Opportunity Act established a network of Community Action Centers in high poverty areas. Many of the CACs developed their own neighborhood employment placement services, thus undermining the domain of the established MPS. Such competition ultimately pressured MPS to establish "outreach" employment placement units either within or adjacent to the CACs. For the first time, the employment service began a systematic effort to move into high poverty areas and develop specialized placement programs for disadvantaged workers.

4. The change in orientation was further realized in 1967 with the concept of Human Resources Development (HRD). As a major policy guiding the placement services, HRD stressed the development of placement units and allocation of staff to high poverty areas; the establishment of outreach programs for disadvantaged workers; the development of intensive employment services such as counseling, job development, and job placement especially geared to the needs of the hard-to-employ; and the formation of linkages and coordinated efforts with other local agencies to help the disadvantaged.

5. The most recent organizing principle for MPS has been the Employability Development Model. Initiated when the assignment of manpower services provided to CEP clients was shifted to the employment service offices, the model purports to be a major departure from traditional ways of providing services to disadvantaged workers. Key to the model is a team approach. The team, composed of an employment counselor, employment interviewer, job developer, and job coach, assumes responsibility for intensive employment services tailored to the needs of the client. The team concept enables the delivery of highly coordinated employment services without interruptions and without having the client shunted from one service to another. The team can consolidate resources to meet the individual needs of the client as well as maintain continuous contact with him from his initial entry until he has adjusted to his job.

6. Another recent and innovative development has been the introduction of computerized Job Banks in the local employment offices. The computerized Job Bank supplies a centralized file of all the available job orders in the local community and dissemina-

tion of job-order information to all the local agencies. The computerized system maintains control over all referrals to jobs, thus eliminating overreferrals. The system also provides rapid update of the available job orders and rapid retrieval of job orders in any occupational category. Experiments with computer-assisted job matching have also been launched in several states.

These developments clearly point to a major shift in the orientation of the employment service from an employer-centered system to a client-centered agency. Moreover, much of the attention is turned to the needs of the hard-to-employ and the development of viable and effective manpower placement services to meet their particular employment needs. Nevertheless, a careful evaluation of manpower placement services for the hard-to-employ is likely to indicate some inherent weaknesses in their ability to serve their constituents effectively, and to suggest that these services, despite many innovative efforts, are in a precarious state.

We suggest that at least part of the problem lies in the fact that new organizational mechanisms developed for and by MPS fail to view the services *in context*. In other words, we argue that no amount of reorganization and restructuring of the agencies is going to alter significantly their service delivery patterns unless it is accompanied by fundamental changes in the context within which placement services function and in their service technology. By "context" we refer to the external environment that provides the agency with the necessary resources to function, and by "service technology" we mean the techniques used by staff to move a client from an unemployed to an employed status.

In light of the above, two basic premises guided this study: First, the placement service is a complex system shaped by the manpower resources it obtains from the environment, by service techniques developed within the agency, and by environmental constraints on the placement of clients in the labor market. Unless these key facets are modified, the service cannot hope to alter its basic modes of operation. Second, the effectiveness of the manpower placement service is dependent upon its ability to develop a multilevel service delivery system that breaks away from the narrow conception of matching persons with jobs. These two propositions are obviously interrelated; expanding the domain and scope of MPS necessitates fundamental modifications of its relations with the environment. Yet the ability of the agency to do so is a function of its service commitments. A narrow and traditional

conception of service goals is likely to result in the atrophy of its relations with the larger community and vice versa. In other words, we suggest that placement agencies have been functioning as reactive rather than active organizations. As reactive agencies their services were shaped primarily as a passive response to external pressures without being actively involved in initiating activities and programs to influence the very environment in which they function. The thesis of this study is that the effectiveness of placement agencies will depend on their ability to transform themselves into active organizations.

The purpose of this work, therefore, is to identify those dimensions in the organization of MPS that require important transformations in order to move the agencies into an active role. The findings are based on an intensive study of agencies designed to serve the disadvantaged in a large metropolitan area. We will provide a framework for the analysis of the placement services and within it we shall explore the effects of the labor market on the services, the relations the MPS develops with other people-serving agencies, the characteristics of the clients, the goals of the services, the careers of clients in the agencies, and the mechanisms by which the services follow up their clients and obtain information about their environment. Based on these considerations, strategies to transform the services into effective organizations will be explored, and a new placement service model will be proposed. Our discussion of manpower placement services includes only those agencies designed explicitly to serve the hard-to-employ. We exclude from our discussion those agencies designed to serve other populations such as professionals, college graduates, and skilled workers.

2

A Systems Approach To Manpower Placement Services

Manpower placement services (MPS) is a complex system composed of many interdependent components. A change in one component may result in a series of chain reactions in other components that could neutralize or negate the intended change or lead to unanticipated consequences in other parts of the agency. A systems perspective would identify and provide a focus on the critical interrelations among the various elements in the organization and between each of them and the external environment so that the consequences of a change in any element on the organization can be predicted.

The advantages of a systems approach are threefold:

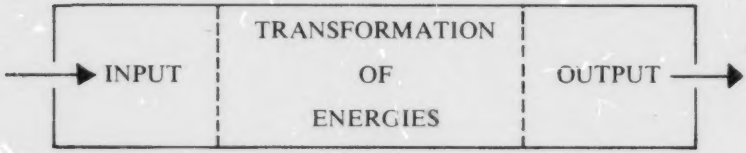
1. It identifies the processes by which the agency attempts to achieve its goals;
2. It indicates the various external and internal forces that operate on the agency and mold its character;
3. It indicates the relationship among various units of the agency and what functions they fulfill.

A systems perspective begins with the assumption that the

agency is composed of a set of interrelated units designed to achieve a common outcome (Gibson, 1960). The interrelated activities of these units provide energic inputs for the system, transform these energies within the system, and produce energic output (von Bertalanffy, 1956). This is shown by Figure 1.

Figure 1.

A Schematic Presentation of an Open System



It is imperative that MPS be viewed as an *open system* in the sense that it is dependent on the environment to survive and achieve its goals. As an open system, the agency has several basic characteristics shared by all such systems (Miller, 1955; Katz and Kahn, 1966):

1. *Purposive behavior.* The agency, as an open system, has a purpose, a reason for being. Agency goals and objectives can be multiple, conflicting, or implicit.

2. *The importation of inputs.* These include clients, job orders, personnel, and fiscal resources necessary for the survival and functioning of the agency.

3. *The existence of a throughput.* This is the complex of processes in which the agency takes the inputs and transforms them into new products or services such as matching clients with jobs or counseling them on occupational careers.

4. *The output of the product.* The agency must develop a set of mechanisms that move the agency product to the environment, such as sending counseled clients to the employers or linking them with the training programs to which they were assigned. This process is often called the referral system.

5. *The agency as a cycle of activities.* The service or product of the agency enables it to obtain new inputs, which are then transformed again into outputs and so on. This cycle can, therefore, be maintained only through the interrelationship of the various agency units.

6. *Negative entropy.* As an open system the agency continuously consumes resources that, unless they are replaced, will result in its disintegration. To avoid this the agency must acquire negative entropy, which simply means that it needs to obtain more resources from the environment than it expends.

7. *The agency as a dynamic but steady state.* Because the agency constantly attracts resources, transforms them, and produces outputs, it is always in a dynamic state. At the same time it develops mechanisms to neutralize and minimize major disruptions to preserve its character.

8. *The existence of information input and negative feedback.* Obviously, without input of information from the environment the agency cannot go on fulfilling its tasks. It needs a system of negative feedback that signals the control centers when deviations occur in the system and of the need to apply corrective measures. Lacking negative feedback, the system will disintegrate.

9. *Development of differentiation.* The agency will move toward increased differentiation and specialization of its various components in order to increase its efficiency.

10. *The principle of equifinality.* In open systems different paths may be taken to achieve the same result, and results are not greatly determined by the initial conditions of the input. This suggests, for example, that the initial characteristics of the client may be less important in determining successful placement than the various procedures employed by the agency.

The essential characteristics of open systems such as MPS are derived from two basic motivations that energize the system. The first force can be termed the "goal seeking motive" and the second force the "self-maintenance or survival motive." The goal seeking motive refers to the continuous efforts of the agency, as expressed by the structural arrangements and processes within it, to achieve its aim, namely, the successful placement of clients in the labor market. The self-maintenance motive, on the other hand, refers to the constant pressures and efforts to keep the agency as a going concern, to maintain its survival, and to enhance its position in the environment. Clearly the agency cannot attain its goals at the risk of jeopardizing its existence, while at the same time it cannot invest all its energies in self-maintenance and enhancement without attempting to achieve its goals at the same time. Nevertheless, these

two forces are not necessarily complementary. Often the agency must compromise in making decisions about its future course. Although it may decide to serve the disadvantaged or hard-to-employ, it also must weigh the costs of such a decision in terms of maintaining itself as a viable agency, being able to obtain necessary resources, and not becoming identified as a marginal organization. Consequently, it is important to realize that most of the critical decisions reflect some compromise, or the push and pull of these two forces.

Often changes that are imposed on MPS fail to take these two factors into account. The decision to shift the goals of MPS to serve the disadvantaged, while highly welcomed from a normative viewpoint, may have failed to consider the consequences to the self-maintenance and well-being of the agency. Such a shift, if not followed by compensating actions, is likely to drain the resources of the agency, affect its image, lead to demoralization of staff, and reduce overall vitality. It is not implied that such a shift is undesirable. To the contrary, MPS must gear its services to the disadvantaged, but unless attention is paid simultaneously to the consequences of the change on the survival and prestige of the agency, the shift is likely to be undermined and neutralized and the agency may pay only lip service to that goal. Likewise, sheer enhancement and assurance of agency maintenance through increased input of resources will not necessarily be accompanied by changes in its goals. Rather, a series of commitments must be made by the executive leadership of the agency to modify its mission.

The interplay between the goal seeking and self-maintenance motives of the agency can be observed in its organization and internal structure. Empirically the agency may be structured according to a number of principles such as function, geographical location, and type of client. From a systems perspective, however, we can identify five subsystems, each fulfilling an important function in the agency and without which the agency is likely to experience strain and disintegration. Each subsystem is characterized by the function it fulfills in the agency and by the common motivation of those participating in it.*

1. *The technical subsystem.* This subsystem is composed of all the agency activities designed to move the client from an unem-

* Much of the following discussion is based on Katz and Kahn (1966).

ployed to an employed status. The function of the technical system is to produce job-ready clients, and the primary motivation of its participants is to achieve proficiency in this task. The range of activities in this subsystem includes assessment of the client's attributes, evaluation of the client's employment potentials, occupational counseling, and referrals to training and employment opportunities.

2. *The technical-support subsystem.* The function of this subsystem is to provide and manage the necessary resources from the environment, so that the service technology of the agency can be operational, and to process those clients ready to leave the agency. There are five categories of resources that must be brought into MPS: (a) fiscal resources to cover the costs involved in operating the service technology as well as other functions of the agency; (b) personnel, such as job interviewers, employment counselors, job developers, and clerical staff; (c) clients who are suitable for the services of the agency; (d) employment opportunities such as job orders and training programs, and (e) complementary services of other agencies such as medical, educational, and welfare services. To obtain these resources MPS must transact with various external units in the environment. The agency establishes, therefore, boundary roles to develop and facilitate these transactions. Budget staff negotiate with state and national officials who control the allocation of fiscal resources; the personnel department transacts with potential agency staff; intake workers screen potential clients; job developers transact with employers; and various staff members develop contacts with other social agencies. In addition, the agency develops roles that function to conduct clients from the agency into the employment world or to other agencies. Depending on the size of the agency, some of these roles are likely to be fulfilled by the same person. All these activities serve to help the agency achieve some mastery over its environment so that it can obtain its resources and process its clients with some certainty.

3. *The institutional subsystem.* This subsystem is fundamental to the survival of the agency since it attempts to obtain social support and legitimation from the environment. Without such support the agency cannot hope to obtain the necessary resources to function. Much of the formal legitimation of manpower placement services comes from a series of national and state laws, such as the Wagner-Peyser Act and MDTA. Without understating the influence of these legislative acts, the importance of obtaining social support in the

local community should not be ignored. This includes support from potential clients and employers, various civic organizations, governmental agencies, and other social service agencies. Activities in this subsystem include the development of ties with key community leaders, contribution of agency resources to important community functions, and public exposition of the agency's services. These activities should function to "institutionalize" the agency in the community, i.e., to project it as an integral and indispensible local unit.

4. *The intelligence and feedback subsystem.* Much of the agency's ability to develop both effective linkages with its external environment and an effective service delivery system is dependent on the operation of the agency's intelligence and feedback mechanisms. The intelligence subsystem should: (a) gather and interpret vital information about changing labor market conditions, development of new employment and training opportunities, needs and attributes of the clients served, new developments in providing employment placement services, and the like; and (b) provide feedback to the staff of the agency on the outcome of their service efforts. Feedback about the results of job referrals, evaluation of staff activities in counseling and job interviewing, and assessment of the progress of clients in the agency enables the agency to reduce uncertainty and plan its services on a rational basis. From a systems perspective it becomes abundantly clear that without such knowledge the agency is in danger of stagnation and deterioration.

5. *The managerial subsystem.* The activities of this subsystem cut across all others in the agency, for the managerial subsystem is in charge of making the key decisions regarding the delivery of services, relations with the environment, and the use of intelligence. The major tasks of the management structure are; (a) to coordinate the activities of the various subsystems in the agency; (b) to resolve conflicts among the various hierarchical levels and to elicit the compliance of staff to their work requirements; and (c) to coordinate the external demands on the agency with its own resources and needs. The management functions to achieve control and stability within the agency and to mediate among the various needs and demands of the subsystems which compose the agency.

This brief description of the subsystems that characterize MPS is intended to show the complexity of the agency itself and the interaction of its various units. It is easy to see that each subsystem is dependent upon inputs from the other subsystems to fulfill its

own function. It is also evident that a change in one subsystem is likely to affect the performance of the others. For example, increased intelligence activities may result in increased capacity to obtain new employment placement opportunities, which in turn influences the ability of the agency service technology to place clients in jobs. The systems approach, as outlined above, makes it possible to identify both those areas in the organization of the agency that are dominant in shaping its character and, also, the probable consequences to other parts of the agency resulting from changes in a given subsystem.

As stated earlier, the technical-support subsystem is the most dominant influence in the patterns and qualities of the agency's services to the clients. This is so because MPS is primarily a "people-processing" organization. Its primary purpose is to process clients so that they will be appropriately matched with those community resources that will enhance their employment status. Put differently, the agency can be regarded as a "broker" agency. It has an elaborate system of assessing the client's employment potentials and needs, and it tries to mediate and link the client with those employment opportunities assessed to be most suitable for him. Most of the critical activities of the agency, therefore, occur at its boundaries, that is, through contacts with clients as they enter and exit the agency, and with potential employers, training programs, and other employment related services in the environment.

Since the function of the technical-support subsystem is exactly the management of the exchanges between the agency and its external environment (the most important of which are potential employment placement resources), the functioning of this subsystem will probably play a critical role in determining the effectiveness of the service technology of manpower placement services. The next chapter will explore in some detail the impact of employment opportunities on the functioning of the agency.

3

Organizational Resources

The ability of MPS to serve its clients is dependent on the mobilization of appropriate resources for them. Recent shifts in the service ideology of MPS, particularly in relation to the disadvantaged, are related to this very issue. In somewhat simple terms, the agency no longer perceives its function as mobilizing manpower to meet the labor needs of employers, but as mobilizing employers and other employment resources to meet the occupational needs of clients. Nor can it be any other way, if we acknowledge that simply meeting the needs of the job market tends to maintain and reinforce the precarious status of the disadvantaged worker. Thus, the effectiveness of the agency in successfully placing the disadvantaged worker and in initiating his occupational mobility is dependent on its ability to enlist the proper employment resources and to actively shape them to meet his needs.

Understanding the needs of the hard-to-employ necessitates identification of the major barriers to his employability. Ferman (1969) succinctly identifies eight principal barriers to jobs: lack of consistent and well-organized work history, lack of adequate cre-

dentials for employment such as education and training, lack of access to job information, inadequate health status, police arrest record, transportation barriers, negative attitudes by union and management decision makers, and negative stereotypes of the hard-to-employ. Needless to say, the effectiveness of the agency in placing the hard-to-employ depends on the development of employment opportunities which will enable the disadvantaged worker to overcome these barriers.

Several conditions must be met before the employment resources enlisted by the agency can be used to advance the employment prospects of the disadvantaged worker. These will be stated in ideal terms in order to illustrate the principles and directions the agency must adopt in developing employment opportunities for its clients.

1. The employment resource must take into account the potentials and limitations of the worker, i.e., the job requirements must be matched and tailored to his effective capabilities. These capabilities should not be measured by formal criteria such as education or previous employment, but rather by the actual requirements of the job vis-a-vis the actual capabilities of the worker. Moreover, effective placement of the disadvantaged also necessitates employment conditions that are structured so as to be minimally affected by the limitations of the worker. It may be necessary to take physical disabilities, ability to manipulate abstract concepts, hours of work, and the like into consideration.

2. Also, the employment resource needs to establish an adequate "level of tolerance" to the worker's initial failures to meet job expectations. It should provide the novice worker with an extended period of time in which he can attempt to experiment and adjust to the employment situation without fear of negative evaluation.

3. The employment resource must provide adequate inducements for the worker to remain employed. These inducements include not only adequate wages, but also appropriate work conditions, the promise of employment stability, and a fair chance to become incorporated into the work structure of the employing organization.

4. The employment resource should not be a "dead end" job. The employment situation needs to provide the potential for occupational mobility both in terms of job promotion and wage increase within relatively short time periods. The current job needs

to be a stepping stone in a fairly well-defined occupational advancement system.

5. By definition an employment resource for the disadvantaged worker must include an effective training component. Without the provision of training most of the above conditions cannot be met. Effective training will enable the worker to adjust to the current work situation, but will also provide him with the essential prerequisite for possible advancement.

6. The evaluation of the worker's performance must be set at a realistic level so that the potentials and limitations of the worker, the length of time he has been employed, and the problems he is attempting to solve in adjusting to the work situation are taken into account. He should not be assessed against some abstract evaluative criteria that do not consider the reality of the particular worker and his work situation.

7. Supervisory patterns for the disadvantaged worker must be adapted to his particular circumstances. The work supervisor needs to be sensitive to the problems that the disadvantaged worker encounters and needs to incorporate elements of coaching and positive interpersonal involvement rather than distant supervision.

Yet, paradoxically, the ability of the agency, as it is currently structured, to actively influence the job market in the directions suggested above is exceedingly limited. The agency is highly dependent on job market labor requirements for employment opportunities. This state of dependency is the one single factor that explains much of the current mode of the manpower placement operation.

In order to understand the factors that lead to such a state of dependency we need to briefly indicate the dynamic relationship between any organization and its environment. As pointed out in Chapter 2, every organization must transact with a wide range of other elements in its environment in order to obtain the necessary resources for its survival and goal attainment. These transactions can be viewed as power-dependence relationships: on the one hand, the organization is dependent on resources provided by a given element in the environment, and, on the other, the organization may have some measure of power over that element if it controls important resources needed by the element (Thompson, 1967). It can be said, therefore, that the organization becomes dependent on a given element in the environment if: (a) that element controls resources highly needed by the organization, (b)

no alternate routes to obtain these resources are available, and (c) the organization does not have resources that are highly desired by that element. In such a situation the resource element has a great deal of influence over the organization. In particular, the organization must abide by the stipulations and contingencies posed by the element as conditions for use of its resources.

Since all three conditions stated above exist in MPS relations with the suppliers of employment resources, the agency is obviously dependent on potential employers. As a result the decision-making processes in the agency come to be dominated by the constraints and stipulations of possible employers. At the operational level this means that the staff make service decisions for their clients less on the basis of what the client needs than on the basis of what the job market requires. Some of the conditions that create this state of dependency and its consequences on actual agency resources must be considered.

In many respects the agency is in a predicament analogous to that of the hard-to-employ. The adage that the disadvantaged worker is "the last to be hired and the first to be fired" has its parallel at the agency level, which is "the last to receive good job orders and the first to lose them." In the first place, MPS tends to play only a marginal role in the job economy, i.e., most of the transactions between workers looking for a job and employers seeking labor occur without the mediation of the agency. Haber and Kruger (1964), for example, estimate that in 1960 the number of nonagricultural placements by the employment placement services per 100 nonagricultural employees was 12 percent for the nation as a whole. The variation in the percentage of placements by occupation is even more revealing. Accordingly, the rates of nonagricultural placements in 1962 by occupation were as follows: 3.5 percent in professional and managerial, 16.2 percent in clerical and sales, 31.8 percent in services, 5.7 percent in skilled labor, 13.5 percent in semi-skilled labor and 29.3 percent in unskilled labor and other. Haber (1960) put it succinctly when he noted: "Most employers do not depend upon the public employment service to recruit their labor requirements. That is especially true for the larger firms. The record also suggests that an overwhelming proportion of the nonagricultural job placements made by the employment services in most areas consist of unskilled and semi-skilled workers and employees in trade and service industries."

Moreover, as the hard-to-employ faces unequal competition

from other job seekers, MPS has to compete with other employment placement mechanisms, mostly the personnel departments of large firms, newspaper ads, private fee-charging agencies, civil service, and informal channels such as friends and relatives. The major advantage of all these channels of job placement over the agency is that they have control over which clients they serve. They can a priori select the type of client they will attempt to place, and, therefore, they are likely to obtain job seekers who are more likely to meet the job requirements set by employers. In contrast, MPS cannot select its clients, and those it receives are likely to be the rejects of the other job placement channels. The conclusion is, then, that most employers and job seekers bypass MPS, unless the employers are from low wage industries and the job seekers are unskilled and otherwise disadvantaged.

In the second place, the agency is affected by the labor market conditions in the same way as the hard-to-employ. The ability of the agency to respond effectively to the employment needs of the disadvantaged worker requires a sustained period of economic growth. Wachtel's (1965) study of the impact of labor market conditions on hard-core unemployment substantiates this point. Defining hard-core unemployment as 26 weeks or more of joblessness, he was able to show that only during the second year of sustained economic growth did a significant reduction occur in the unemployment rate of this cohort. That is, their opportunity for employment came only after the more skilled of the unemployed were hired.

This problem introduces another feature of the agency that increases its dependency on potential employers, namely, the clients it serves. In keeping with its mandate, the majority of job applicants that seek the services of the agency can be defined as "occupationally disadvantaged." Without going into a detailed analysis of such a population, it is important to note that, for whatever reason, they are the least sought after by potential employers. Whatever the attributes of the hard-to-employ, the agency itself cannot easily avoid the stigma attached to the population it serves, and it inevitably comes to share with them a low status in the community. Thus the usual low prestige of MPS is due partly to the nature and social position of its clientele.

Considering the above characteristics, it is clear that the ability of MPS to negotiate for desirable employment placement opportunities for its clients is quite limited. In order to be successful, the

agency must possess strategic resources with which it can negotiate from a power position vis-à-vis potential employers. As currently structured, such resources are lacking, for it does not even control the supply of labor needed by potential employers. This point should be emphasized since it has important policy implications on the future role of the MPS. Without strategic resources, the agency becomes dependent on the labor needs of employers. Most important, their demands, constraints, and stipulations come to dominate the decision-making processes of the agency. They do so not only through the type of job orders and training opportunities they provide the agency, but also through the qualification requirements they attach to the various job orders.

The only strategic resources that MPS could possess to influence the characteristics of employment resources are those based on the provision of direct or indirect incentives to potential employers, either through financing training programs prior to actual employment or through subsidies to offset costs of recruiting, training, creation of jobs, job coaching, and supportive services for the disadvantaged worker. Examples of such incentives are federally financed programs such as OJT (On-the-Job Training), CEP (Concentrated Employment Program), JOBS, NYC, and New Careers, among others. The incentives these programs offer are used to negotiate with potential employers for the creation of jobs that fit the needs of the hard-to-employ. Without attempting to evaluate the programs, the key point to be stressed is that, by and large, only through the use of such resources have the agencies been able to negotiate for appropriate employment opportunities, albeit with various degrees of success.

Nevertheless, the availability of such resources has been exceedingly small when compared to the demands for employment MPS is asked to respond to and, therefore, the jobs created through these programs can meet the needs of only a fraction of the total disadvantaged population who are either unemployed or, more likely, underemployed. Consequently, agency dependency on potential employers has been only slightly reduced, although the latter does indicate one possible way for MPS to acquire strategic resources.

What are the types of job orders that MPS is able to obtain? In general, the job orders tend to reflect the very occupational structure of the disadvantaged workers. A study of two agencies serving the disadvantaged (all nonwhite) in Detroit bears this pattern out. Table 3 shows that, with the expected exception of the two cate-

gories of professionals, managers, and proprietors; and craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers, the distribution of the job orders in both agencies tends to be remarkably similar to the occupational structure of the populations toward which they were directed.

Table 3.

Comparison of the Occupational Distribution of the Job Orders of Two MPS and their Target Populations in Detroit[1]

Occupation	*Agency A job orders*	*Target population A*[2]*: low-income nonwhite*	*Agency B job orders*	*Target population B*[2]*: low income nonwhite*
n =	401	377	437	142
Professionals, managers, and proprietors	—	7%	1%	5%
Clerical and sales workers	13	9	5	4
Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers	5	10	3	14
Operatives and kindred workers	28	32	34	24
Private household and service workers	42	33	46	32
Laborers (Nonfarm)	12	9	13	11
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest percentile.
2. Target population is composed of nonwhites with family income under $6,000 who are included in the labor force.

Source: Detroit Transportation and Land Use Survey (1966).

It may be argued that the job orders received by MPS are so selected as to accommodate the low skill level of the applicants. Frequently, poverty and underemployment are explained by the lack of education, training, skills, and stable work history on the part of the poor, that is, these factors are considered major barriers to better wage earnings. Yet, as Bluestone (1965) points

out, *within* occupational categories the relationship between the education of the worker and his wage rate is not so clear. Bluestone cites a study done by Delehanty and Evans showing that both among operative occupations (in manufacturing) and service occupations the difference in educational attainment between the low and the high wage earners was exceedingly small. Rather, Bluestone (1965: 301) suggests: "For many of the working poor (and many of the unemployed) the problem is not so much due to a lack of preparation on the part of the individual, but due to the inability of a section of the economy to furnish an adequate wage for what is adequate work."

Bluestone suggests two measures for classifying industries as low wage:

1. An average wage of $2.25 per hour or below for all nonsupervisory personnel;

2. Percent of nonsupervisory personnel with average hourly earnings of 60 percent or less of the national average hourly wages for production workers on all manufacturing payrolls. This measure attempts to approximate a "poverty level," used by the Economic Advisory Council, of $3,000 annual income or less.

While these definitions are somewhat arbitrary, a clear and significant pattern of low wage industries can be discerned. For example, low wage industries, as defined by either of the above definitions, show significantly lower rates of wage increases, low levels of productivity, elastic demand for their products, and location in a competitive market. It is plausible that one factor in maintaining the low wages of the urban poor is the practice by MPS of placing applicants in low wage industries. Is that pattern discernible in the two agencies cited earlier?

Data on low wage industries in Detroit are not readily available, and the determination of what constitutes low wage industry there had to rely on some arbitrary definitions as well. As a rule, those industries that Bluestone found to have 60 percent or more of their nonsupervisory personnel earning low wages on a national basis were also classified as low wage industries in Detroit. When such data were not available, the industry was classified as low wage if the average hourly pay of nonsupervisory personnel was $2.35 or less (60 percent of the average hourly wage of all manufacturing industries in Detroit for the third quarter of 1968).

As indicated by Table 4, 54 percent and 67 percent of all available job orders in Agency A and Agency B respectively were

Table 4.

Job Orders from Low Wage Industries Available in Two Manpower Agencies for the Disadvantaged in Detroit

Low wage industry	*Agency A*			*Agency B*		
	% of all job orders	*Mean hourly wage*[1]	*% Differ. from mean industry hourly wage*[2]	*% of all job orders*	*Mean hourly wage*[1]	*% Differ. from mean industry hourly wage*[2]
Total number of low wage job orders	(215)			(289)		
Percent of all job orders	53.6			66.7		
Landscape	4.7	2.2	—	2.8	2.0	—
Furniture products	1.0	2.2	−31	—	—	—
Department stores	2.2	2.2	−14.4[3]	1.8	2.0	−37.7[3]
Gas service stations	3.7	2.1	−17.3	11.0	1.8	−29.1
Eating and drinking places	16.7	1.6	+ 6.6[4]	21.2	1.6	+ 6.6[4]
Retail stores	1.2	2.1	+24.3	1.6	2.0	+18.2[5]
Real estate operators	6.7	1.8	−18.2[5]	3.2	1.8	−18.2[5]
Misc. business service (guard, janitor, etc.)	4.5	2.0	− 1.0	9.9	2.0	− 1.0
Hotels and motels	2.0	1.9	+ 3.3	3.7	1.4	−23.9
Laundries and dry cleaning	5.5	1.8	−19.3	2.8	1.8	−19.3
Hospitals and nursing homes	5.2	1.7	−10.5[4]	6.7	1.6	−15.8
Private household	—	—	—	1.8	1.2	—

1. Based on wage listed in job orders.
2. Based on average industry hourly wage in Detroit for the third quarter of 1968 as reported by the Michigan Employment Security Commission.
3. Based on annual average industry hourly wage.
4. Based on Department of Labor Industry wage survey for Detroit (1966-67) adjusted by average wage rise of 6 percent from 1967-1968.
5. Based on Department of Labor area wage survey for Detroit (1968).

from low wage industries. This was not unexpected since, as Table 4 indicates, the two major industrial sources of job orders—retail trade and services—were mostly characterized by low wages. The difference between the two agencies was due to a larger number of job orders from the auto industry, a high wage industry, in Agency A.

As was noted earlier, employment resources available to the two agencies essentially reflected the labor market position of the underemployed urban poor. In particular, such a resource profile, while potentially providing employment for the poor, did not seem to facilitate an exit from poverty. Nor does it appear that further occupational advancement became available. Only about 20 percent of the job orders indicated that the employers would train the applicant.

The probability of employment placement in low wage industries was particularly high for women, since few of the job orders available from manufacturing and wholesale industries had openings for female employees. In particular, no assembly line jobs were available to women. The overwhelming majority of openings for women in both agencies were in low wage industries. It was easiest to find work as a waitress, shirt presser, or nurse's aide. Only in Agency A were as many as 7 percent of the job orders in the clerical and sales field open to women. The pattern of job orders available to the two agencies created particular organizational problems in routing women to employment placements and, therefore, imposed serious barriers for this segment of the client population.

The availability of training opportunities to MPS should be assessed briefly. As was noted earlier, the training resources allocated to the agency through such programs as MDTA and CEP are generally exceedingly small in comparison with the needs of the population. It is difficult to determine the proportion of agency applicants referred to training programs since agency access to such programs varies greatly. Only 8 percent of the clients in Agency A and 18 percent of the clients in Agency B were referred to training. There are several factors that seem to inhibit client requests for training: (1) Most training allowances (available through MDTA) pay a trainee less than he or she could earn from an unskilled job, while the average length of a training program is 48 weeks; (2) To be eligible for such allowances clients have to have at least one year of work experience, often in addition

to a high school education and the proper occupational aptitude (unless they are youths); (3) The waiting period for entry into a training program averages from three to six weeks or longer. The availability of training opportunities varies considerably over time. Hence, both the clients and the employment counselors have to make decisions concerning training referrals in a high state of uncertainty. When faced with such uncertainty, clients are more likely to ask for a job placement.

It is interesting to note the type of training programs MPS has to offer the disadvantaged worker. As Table 5 indicates, in the two agencies studied, referrals to basic education programs were most common. These were "motivational" training programs that function to orient the client to the world of work and thus had no qualification restrictions. The other two major training fields were clerical and services, which were largely designed for women. The fact that approximately 45 percent of all training referrals in both agencies were to either basic education or service occupations indicates that, for a significant proportion of the clients referred, the training programs provided for little occupational advancement. This further reduced the attraction of training to many clients. As Sommers (1965: 233) indicates: "Many of the (M.D.T.A.) training programs are geared to shortages in the service occupations such as nurses' aides and orderlies, but the long-term impact of these courses on the unemployed in these areas has been slight."

This picture of the employment resources available to MPS is rather pessimistic. It reflects the fundamental fact that the agency, as currently structured, is relatively powerless to influence the

Table 5.

Training Referrals by Occupation for Two Manpower Placement Agencies

Occupation	*Agency A* ($n = 26$)	*Agency B* ($n = 47$)
Basic education	34.6%	34.0%
Clerical, sales	23.1	21.3
Service occupations	11.5	10.6
Tailoring	7.7	6.4
Welding	15.4	8.5
Mechanics	—	12.7
Other	7.7	6.4
Total	100	100

employment world on behalf of its clients. The analysis indicated that a major source of the agency's dependency on its external environment, i.e., potential employers, stems from the lack of strategic resources with which the agency can effectively negotiate for employment resources. It follows, therefore, that a major policy concern must be to increase these resources if the agency is to become a viable employment placement service, particularly for the disadvantaged. There are two primary avenues through which the agency can establish a more active role vis-a-vis the employment market; one at the macro level (through the intervention of governmental agencies controlling agency resources) and the other at the micro level (through the actions taken by the executive leadership of the agency itself). These two levels reinforce rather than exclude each other.

At the macro level, far greater governmental resources must be given to the agency to be used as "incentives" for potential employers. In order to persuade potential employers to develop jobs according to the principles stated earlier, MPS must be in the position of offering subsidies to offset the costs incurred by the employers. The issue of costs should not be simply a monetary consideration. It is increasingly apparent that, even with monetary subsidies, potential employers are not likely to initiate the necessary ancillary services such as recruitment, remedial reading, health services, and counseling without which the chances of the disadvantaged to be reintegrated in the employment world are small. Governmental resources need to be directed toward the development of such services within the organizational boundaries of the agency; that is, the agency itself will have to be transformed into a comprehensive multiservice agency.

At this level it may be necessary to use governmental resources in public sector job development as well. Sheppard (1969: 18), for example, concludes: "Even with the best of motives, the best of recruiting, training, on-the-job techniques, etc. the actual *numbers* of jobs now available for the hard-core unemployed and underemployed in private industry are limited, or not readily accessible to such persons." Sheppard suggests, therefore, that the government itself create jobs in the public sector, which could enable MPS to obtain new employment resources that suit the needs of the hard-to-employ.

At the micro level, the agency must develop the services and expertise needed by potential employers so that a basis for coopera-

tion can be established. These services are of two categories: services to the worker himself and services to the employer.*

1. *Services to the worker.* Such a program should provide the necessary supportive services to initiate and maintain adequate worker performance on the job that the employer is unwilling or unable to give. MPS has the best chance of any organization to obtain information on the problems that disadvantaged workers encounter in the employment situation. Skillful use of such information can effect a rational service design. If a significant reduction of labor turnover results, such changes will be welcomed by employers. Some specific supportive services could be:

Orientation and job coaching. These services involve the introduction of the worker to the employment situation and the reinforcement of work motivation through such interpersonal devices as a "buddy-system" and group counseling. The job coaching involves careful teaching of every essential step of the job through a series of successive approximations including demonstration, experimentation by the worker, and immediate feedback of results to him. Job coaching also entails helping the worker solve problems effectively as they arise on the job. Coaching should function as a "sensor" that quickly detects problems and can signal for the mobilization of necessary resources to solve them.

Interpersonal counseling. Counseling should help the worker cope with interpersonal problems that arise on the job (or in other areas) and affect his commitment and motivation toward work.

Financial assistance. In many instances the disadvantaged worker cannot stay on the job because of pressing financial problems. He may lack the resources to obtain necessary tools, uniforms, or bonding. He may need emergency financial aid before he can even accept the job, or face a financial crisis while on the job. The ability of the agency to assist him in this area will undoubtedly increase his employment stability.

Assistance in transportation and child care. Solutions in both these important areas tend to be costly. Nevertheless, it seems essential that MPS either mobilize its own or other community resources to help the disadvantaged worker overcome these barriers.

Health services. Although the agency itself need not develop health services, it needs to develop effective referral arrangements

* See also Ferman (1969).

with community health facilities to assist in meeting the health needs of the worker. MPS can play an important part in funneling rapid medical attention to the worker so that his job is not jeopardized.

2. *Services to the employer.* Any comprehensive manpower placement agency must develop high level expertise in the major components of the job economy. Its expertise needs to be such that potential employers will consider it advantageous to seek expert agency services. Specific services to the employer may be of the following order:

Counseling on supervisor-worker relations. This is one key area in which firms of every type seek continuous help and advice, particularly as they open their doors to the disadvantaged worker. With proper expertise the agency can assist supervisors in new "human relations" techniques, which at the same time will have positive consequences on the performance of the worker himself.

Analysis of job qualifications and redesign of jobs. Many of the qualifications set by employers may not be relevant or appropriate to the actual job requirements, which results in unnecessary costs to the employer and hardship to the disadvantaged worker. MPS can be most instrumental in helping employers define more realistic job requirements. Concomitantly, with agency help in job redesign, employers may solve some of their manpower problems. The employment of veterans trained as medics in clinics and hospitals to assist the medical staff is a case in point. It should be noted, in this context, that redesign of jobs has been the most effective device in placing the physically handicapped in jobs, and MPS should adopt such a model.

Advice on and development of training programs. These programs should enable the employer to upgrade the level of job performance and to develop opportunities for advancement within his firm, which will enhance the stability, morale, and motivation of his work force.

These and other measures that could be developed do not necessarily require a large commitment of new resources, but rather the reallocation of existing resources, changes in the skills of the staff, and, most important, a refocus of the goals and service structure of the agency. These topics will be considered in the next chapter.

4

Structure of Services

Drastic increases in the scope and type of manpower placement resources are not enough to change the agency from a reactive to an active organization. Concomitant changes in the goals and technical subsystem are also necessary. Following our systems perspective, it should be evident that changes in the supportive subsystem, as proposed in the previous chapter, will not produce immediate results in the service patterns of the agency. The interaction between the two subsystems is such that the external resources marshalled by the agency influence the scope and essence of the services and the ways they are operationalized. In turn, the service goals and technology, as they are operationalized in the agency, dictate the range of resources that the supportive subsystem needs to mobilize. As a result, MPS problems cannot be explained simply in terms of lack of resources. Rather, a key factor that reinforces the existing relations between the agency and its external environment is its service goals and technology. Having adapted to the external constraints, they no longer pressure the organization to expand and intensify its external relations, nor are they likely

to respond meaningfully to new opportunities unless they themselves change. This is an important point. There is no assurance that expansion of agency resources will result in the desired changes in agency services unless the service goals and technology are also modified.

In general, the service goals of the agency define the population to be served, the range of problems or needs to be dealt with, and the type of services to be offered. The service technology, on the other hand, is the means by which the agency attempts to achieve these goals. A key characteristic of organizational goals is that they define the boundaries of the agency and identify those elements in the external environment that are essential to the successful attainment of the goals. For example, if the goals of manpower placement services are narrowly defined as referral of job seekers to employers, then the key elements in the environment will be potential employers who are likely to hire unskilled labor. If, however, the goals of the agency are more broadly defined to include assisting the clients in employment related problems, then the key elements in the environment will also include such organizations as the department of social services, public medical facilities, neighborhood action centers, and the police.

Any discussion of the organizational goals of manpower placement services must isolate the level at which these goals are being defined. The concept of "organizational goals" has several, not necessarily congruent, meanings. For example, there are official goals, which are public statements aimed at gaining community support; output goals, which describe the goods and services the agency provides its consumers: executive goals, which guide the growth and development of the agency; and informal goals, which reflect the objectives of different staff groups in the agency. Our discussion is confined to the agency's operative goals. As defined by Perrow (1961: 855): "Operative goals designate the ends sought through the actual operating policies of the organization; they tell us what the organization actually is trying to do, regardless of what official goals say are the aims."

Our study of the two manpower placement services in Detroit indicated that their operative goals were defined in a series of explicit or implicit operating policies that can be summarized as follows:

1. The main task of the agency was to match the client with any available job, preferably according to his past employment experi-

ence and current interest. The key assumption was that the sooner the client could be matched with a job and be working, irrespective of the nature of the job, the better were his chances to improve his status.

2. A secondary task of the agency was to refer clients to training programs. Such a referral was considered desirable for two types of clients: those who explicitly expressed interest in training and showed enough commitment and capacity to undergo the screening and waiting period involved, and those who failed to stay on any of the jobs they were referred to, but maintained contact with the agency.

3. Clients who were not ready to accept a job referral or lacked the attributes for training were to receive counseling to prepare them for either of the two referral alternatives.

4. The interaction between MPS and the client was to be restricted to the occupational referral of the client. Other client attributes and problems, even when affecting his occupational status, were to be dealt with minimally, if at all.

Thus the agencies, at the operating level, defined their goals primarily as matching the client with whatever job the agencies could obtain. Translated into everyday performance, the service goals of the agencies were narrowly defined. Even such activities as testing and counseling were seen as facilitating the primary objective, and, once a referral was made, the agencies limited their contact with the client to a sporadic follow-up. The reinitiation of contact was left to the client, usually occurring when the referral failed.

The implementation of these operative goals and their consequences on the actual services provided to clients can best be seen through the operation of their service technologies (the way staff made decisions about services to be offered each client). Four client careers were identified in the agencies studied (Table 6): (1) referral to jobs; (2) referral to training; (3) being counseled; and (4) referral to other agencies. Primary services were given to clients in the first and second categories. Clients in the third category could be considered "in process"; they were to be "worked upon" by the agency in order to prepare them for either a job or a training referral. Clients in the last category were mostly those the agency could not serve. These were clients who did not fit the formal definition of "hard-to-employ," and they are not included in this analysis. Although clients could pass through any combina-

Table 6.

Service Outcome in Agency A and Agency B

Service Outcome	*Agency A*		*Agency B*	
Referred to jobs	130	41.1	102	40.4
Referred to training	26	8.2	47	18.6
Counseled	97	30.7	53	21.0
Referred to other agencies	34	10.7	42	16.6
Registered only	29	9.2	8	3.2
Total	316	100	252	100

tion of these service paths, for purposes of analysis they were classified according to the *predominant* agency response to their employment requests.

1. *Referrals to jobs.* As mentioned earlier, with the exception of jobs in the auto industry, the supply of attractive job orders in the two agencies was exceedingly limited and thus only a fraction of the clients could be referred to jobs. The unfavorable wage rates often tended to discourage acceptance of job referrals by clients. The situation was even worse for female applicants for whom the agencies had very few attractive job orders. As a result, staff decisions on referring clients to jobs assumed the following pattern:

(a) Males were far more likely to be referred to jobs than females.

(b) The more economically disadvantaged the client (e.g., lack of income, prolonged unemployment, many dependents), the greater were his chances of being referred to a job since he was more likely to accept employment even in unattractive, low-wage areas.

(c) Clients expressing some interest in training or failing to indicate specific jobs they wanted were far less likely to be referred to jobs. These clients might not have expressed a strong desire to accept a job. For the staff, however, expression of interest in training or inability to specify job preference justified a delay in attempts to match them with the limited supply of jobs.

(d) Interestingly, clients who indicated legal, health, or interpersonal problems besides unemployment were also less likely to be referred to jobs, even though such clients were also more economically disadvantaged. Yet the fact that these clients indicated having such problems meant that they were not "job ready." We

shall see that manpower placement services had no adequate means to cope with these problems.

We should point out that the actual match of the client with a given job was based upon consideration of very few client attributes. This is not surprising since almost all the jobs available were in unskilled occupations and none were designed to meet specific needs of the clients. The sex of the client, his previous job, and the type of job he wanted were, therefore, the key factors that determined the job to which he was referred. Only in referrals to clerical jobs was the client's level of education also an important factor to be considered.

2. *Referrals to training.* As mentioned earlier, the proportion of clients referred to training was exceedingly small (8 percent in agency A and 18 percent in agency B). Most of the available training opportunities were for basic education, clerical, and service occupations. A majority of the training slots were, therefore, designated for women. The training allowances were small and clients had to wait a relatively long, indeterminate period of time for an opening in a program. As a result, it was not surprising that those likely to be referred to training were clients who expressed a strong enough commitment to wait the necessary time period. These clients were more likely to have other sources of income and thus were not pressed to seek an immediate job.

Perhaps the most revealing fact about referral to training programs was the random nature of the whole process. Referrals occurred when the agencies received a number of training slots and when clients happened to be available who were or could be made interested in them at that moment.

3. *Being counseled.* One of the most popular services in MPS is counseling, which is considered a critical tool in the total service technology of the agency. An important measure of the quality of services offered by agencies is the proportion of clients receiving counseling services. There can be no denial that counseling is a crucial mechanism in directing the client towards pursuit of an appropriate career, in helping him overcome problems that block his ability to pursue such a career, and in marshaling the necessary resources for the client to meet the above objectives. No attempt will be made here to assess the effectiveness of counseling or its importance; rather, analysis will be concerned with how counseling is being used by MPS and what organizational functions it serves.

In the agencies studied, clients interested in training were always

referred to the employment counselors and so were applicants seeking their first entry into the labor market. For these clients the counseling consisted primarily of testing (i.e., GATB) and assessment of their occupational potentials. More important, counseling was also used as a buffer and regulating device between the demands of clients and available organizational resources. That is, clients for whom the agencies did not have employment resources, such as women, were more likely to be referred to counseling. Clients who wanted any sort of work or indicated attributes that increased the difficulty of matching them with a job, such as a low educational level or lack of work experience, were more likely to be referred to counseling if jobs that could tolerate such attributes were not available. In short, the decision to refer a client to counseling and keep him there was partly determined by the degree to which he and the available job orders or training opportunities were incompatible. When counseling is used as a buffer, although it may be highly useful to clients, its intended purpose is clearly undermined. The door is open for the misuse of such a service and may lead to the counseling of inappropriate clients. Furthermore, clients may come to resent counseling and perceive it as a device that delays job referrals. Gordon (1969), for example, noted that MDTA projects for disadvantaged youth that began with immediate work experience tended to be more successful than those starting with testing and counseling.

The function of counseling in the agencies studied was also narrowly defined. The bulk of the counseling function consisted of testing and assessing the vocational potentials of the client and matching him, when feasible, with a training program. Few attempts were made to deal with barriers to employment and other problems that the client might have experienced. One indication of this was the fact that hardly any referrals to other social service agencies were made, nor were there any efforts to mobilize the services needed to deal with employment-related problems. The only exceptions were some referrals to a public medical clinic and to the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Reviewing the services that clients could receive from the two agencies, it is evident that each agency had a very small repertoire of means to improve the employability of clients, particularly in the face of the rather complex employment problems that such a population presents. Two critical problems in service technology design were apparent: the employment resources available to

MPS were not tailored to the needs of the clients, and the services were so narrowly defined as to exclude possible interventions in employment-related problems presented by clients. Agencies did not develop services or mobilize the services of other agencies to deal effectively with financial, medical, legal, interpersonal, and other problems which impeded client employability, in addition to low levels of education, few work skills, and the like.

Equally revealing were the patterns of interaction between staff and clients in the two agencies. These interactions, which were systematically observed and recorded, underlined the fundamental weakness of the agency service technology. Initial encounters between client and staff were very illuminating, since they formed the beginning of the client's career in each agency. These encounters functioned to explore the client's biography in order to obtain necessary information about his employment problems and potentials and to determine the courses of action the agency should undertake. Yet there were five organizational factors that limited staff interest in the client's biography, at least in the initial encounter:

1. Since most job orders at the disposal of the agencies were of low skill level, extensive knowledge of the client's employment background did not help the matching process.
2. The limited supply of training opportunities, most of which were also in low skill occupations, did not necessitate extensive exploration of the client's background.
3. Extensive biographical exploration by staff might raise the client's expectations for obtaining services above what the staff could actually deliver.
4. The agencies lacked or failed to use any other resources, except for counseling, to handle employment-related problems and hence avoided extensive background exploration.
5. Finally, it was assumed that, for clients who did present significant placement problems, extensive exploration would be undertaken by the counselors when referred to them.

The exploration of the clients' biographies was, therefore, very limited, with staff adhering closely to the highly standardized intake form requirements. In fact, the primary purpose of the intake process was to classify the client in the appropriate category according to the Directory of Occupational Titles (D.O.T.), which then served as the key in matching the client with a job. The highly routinized intake procedures offered clients little opportunity

or encouragement to elaborate on their personal circumstances. Even when clients attempted to do so, their efforts to share more of their personal situation with the staff tended to be circumscribed. The following excerpts from staff-client interviews are cases in point:

> Client is a 34-year-old woman, divorced with three children. Client works now as a maid but wants a better job and closer to home. Client is very eager to improve her lot. One son is about to return from the State Training School and she wants to upgrade herself so that she could provide a better home for her children. The worker does not respond to any of these aspirations, nor record them.

> Client is a 32-year-old female, married with seven children. Husband is presently unemployed and client wants immediate employment, except for janitorial work. Client tries to impress worker with the seriousness of her problem by indicating lack of income, marital discord, etc. Worker responds by saying client should see counselor to explore training possibilities.

These examples underline the organizational dilemma that staff tried to avoid by discouraging clients from sharing with them their personal problems: Increased involvement in the client's biography committed staff to respond to the client's perceived urgency by referring him to jobs or training opportunities which were in limited supply. This suggests that staff were constrained from encouraging individualization of the clients lest they commit the organization to deliver services and resources not actually available. Moreover, as noted earlier, such resources as were available were not sufficiently differentiated to accommodate the idiosyncratic needs of the clients. Staff in both agencies explored the occupational goals and training interests of the clients very sparingly. In-depth exploration of these areas created the danger of raising the client's aspirations beyond staff perception of his capabilities or beyond the ability and resourcefulness of the organization to respond favorably to such aspirations. The following incident points to the dilemma staff faced in such instances:

> Client is 53 years of age and the sole breadwinner for a family of four. Her husband is disabled and the family is currently supported by monthly grants from ADC-U. Client has

> worked as a food service employee for one of the city schools but is currently laid off. Client tells worker she is very eager to work and would like very much to get off ADC-U. Worker seems impressed by client's desire to work and decides to refer her to a job as a charwoman for Maintenance Services. Worker also gives client bus tickets to get there. Two hours later, client's husband calls worker and angrily says, "How dare you send my wife to a job house cleaning!" He also said he was sending back the bus tickets.

The staff responses to service requests made by clients were guided by an implicit conception of what constitutes a "normal case." That is, through their daily experiences staff developed a set of working stereotypes that enabled them to classify clients into broad categories and thus reduce, for themselves, the vast variations and idiosyncracies clients presented. While there were differences between the two agencies and among staff members in each, the core assumptions of a "normal case" could be summarized as follows:

1. The client is basically unskilled and with poor work history, yet he has unrealistic occupational aspirations. Clients have to be taught to have realistic expectations.
2. The client should not expect to obtain from the agency an immediate job or aspire to a better job than he had previously held.
3. Regardless of his employment background and aspirations, the best procedure to help the client is to refer him to any job available, if possible.
4. The female client must indicate motivation to seek employment. She should not be referred to employment unless she accepts counseling, a test of her motivation.

With the exception of clients referred to jobs in the auto industry, observation indicated that staff in both agencies systematically attempted to deflate the client's self-aspirations as well as limit his expectations of the services he could obtain from the organization. The following excerpts from two typical interviews form a case in point:

> Client is a 27-year-old male who recently quit a job as a laborer for the utility company, earning $2.32 per hour. Client heard of a training program in tailoring and was interested in such a program. Worker felt client should not have left such a well paying job and questioned the client's desire to work.

> Client is a 20-year-old male with a 12th grade education. Client just quit his job as a stock clerk. Job paid $2.00 per hour but client wanted a better paying job. Worker chided client for quitting such a job and indicated that they may not be able to find him a better one.

To some extent, each response reflects the characteristics of agency job orders and training opportunities. The fact that most job orders offered low-wage jobs prompted staff to moderate the client's expectations in order to obtain his acquiescence in accepting such a referral. For similar reasons staff were likely to underrate the client's perception of his own qualifications and skills or ignore them altogether. This was particularly true in the case of females. The following examples indicate how such staff responses occurred:

> Client is a 34-year-old woman with a 12th grade education. Apparently, client had to quit her latest job as a cook on physician's orders. Client has been in a number of training programs including typing, operating office machines, and cosmetology (the latter she did not finish). Client wanted employment in an office doing light office work. Worker tried to encourage client to go into training but client has had enough of that. Worker then pointed out agency does not have well paying jobs and that client does not have the skills for office work. Worker was going to tell client to come again, but at the last minute decided to send her for a Civil Service examination.

> Client is a 20-year-old male, single with no dependents, who completed 11 years of education. Client recently graduated from the Job Corps and brought along with him his Certificate of Graduation. Client is interested in factory work. Worker does not discuss with client his Job Corps training but simply refers him to an assembly line job.

The use of a "normal case" conception by staff obviously enabled them to reduce the degree of uncertainty in their transactions with clients, but, as the few case examples indicate, the costs to the client were rather high. The stereotype of the "hard-to-employ" which he or she was attempting to discard was again applied to him by the very agency which presumably would help him overcome the stereotype. This points to a basic danger in agency service technology, which is not often recognized, the process of labeling.

No doubt, in any service technology that is based on the processing of people some sort of classification system is needed. With it relevant client attributes can be assessed to provide a helpful profile of their employment status and serve as a guide for action. It is hard to conceive of an effective service technology without such a classification scheme. The difficulty lies in the ways the classification system is developed and operationalized.

Key factors that influence the type of classification system an agency could develop are its service goals and resources. These two will affect the type of client attributes to be considered and the amount of care devoted to their assessment. The more narrow the goal definitions of the agency and the fewer its service resources, the less elaborate and the more general will be its classification system. Narrow service goals tend to constrict the number of client attributes that are of concern to the agency. Lack of service resources diminishes the importance of detailed investigation of these attributes. Thus, the classification system adopted by the agency is not based solely on the needs and problems clients present, but also reflects various organizational exigencies.

The application of a classification system harbors the danger of "self-fulfilling prophecies." That is, once a label is attached to a client, the label rather than the client evokes responses by various staff members in the agency. If a client, for example, is defined as lacking motivation to work, the definition may cause staff to demand that he be counseled for a prolonged period of time, or that he accept an unattractive job referral, which may only lead to a negative reaction by the client and thus to a confirmation, in the eyes of the staff, that he is in fact unmotivated. Moreover, staff may attribute a level of stability to the label that is not reflected in the behavior of the client. The label given to a client, even such as the D.O.T. code, may not be considered tentative, subject to change or reevaluation on the basis of new information. Rather, the label tends to become a part of the permanent record of the client, which he cannot escape.

Finally, the danger that a classification system can misrepresent the attributes of the client increases when the assessment and evaluation procedures are based on limited and underdeveloped scientific vocational knowledge and theory and when professional staff is lacking. Under these circumstances the classification system may be of questionable validity and be inappropriately applied by staff.

The service technologies, as described above, were also reflected in the internal structure or division of labor within the agencies. This structure, we should add, is typical of most manpower placement services and incorporates the basic concept of a "team." A team was composed of an employment interviewer, employment counselor, and a community aide. Clients were assigned to teams in order to equalize the case load. Within each team the function of the employment interviewer was to conduct the initial intake interview and to refer the client to jobs. The counselor, the head of the team, was in charge of handling all the problems that impeded the employability of the client. His activities, as mentioned earlier, included testing, counseling, and referrals to training programs. When a client was judged to be "job ready," he was directed to the employment interviewer for a job referral. The community aide had the important function of following up the client, ascertaining whether he followed through on the referrals, and encouraging him to return to the agency when additional services were needed. In some agencies a job developer is also attached to each team.

The concept of a "team" is very appealing and is frequently perceived as a sign of progress and innovation. There is, therefore, a tendency to develop a team structure, often without paying adequate attention to the prerequisites for its success and the underlying service technology it presumes to operationalize. It is clear that a team structure is no substitute in itself for an effective service technology. If the underlying procedures and mechanisms by which MPS attempts to increase the employability of the clients remain the same, no structural changes among staff are going to alter these procedures or their level of effectiveness. This point needs to be emphasized since agency administrators often look to agency structure for the cause of the low level of effectiveness. They tend to assume that changes in the staff structure will improve the effectiveness of the agency, often failing to perceive that how services are delivered is often more important than who delivers them. It really does not matter who does the intake interview, for example, if the basic service mechanism of the agency is to match the client with a job and not handle his employment-related problems. Similarly, whether the employment interviewer or employment counselor refers the client to a job is of no consequence unless the job itself is tailored to the needs of the client. Any member of the team can be assigned to follow up without altering the procedure, unless follow up also involves job coaching.

It is not surprising, then, that the development of teams in the agencies did not necessarily improve their services. Clients tended to gravitate toward the employment interviewers, since they controlled the job referrals. The employment counselors, although the heads of their teams, contributed in a very minor way to performance of employment interviewers and had little influence over them. The advice they could give on job matching was minimal, given the nature of the jobs and the lack of other services. The function of the employment counselors became, therefore, highly routinized, involving testing, assessment, and preparing clients for referrals to training programs. As a result, there was limited coordination between the employment interviewer and counselor, and the latter was used by the former as a "safety valve." That is, clients who presented problems to the employment interviewer were referred to the counselor with the hope that he could cope with them.

The above examples point to three basic prerequisites for an effective team structure: Each member of the team specializes in a defined and critical aspect of the total service technology; each specialization involves a series of tasks that are essential to maintain the effectiveness of the service technology; and each member of the team can successfully accomplish his tasks only through being dependent on the performance of the other team members. Hence in the case of the MPS the last two prerequisites clearly were not present, and the team structure did not fulfil its objectives.

To review the analysis of the service goals and technology of MPS, a causal relationship was suggested among the definitions of agency operative goals, the patterns of client careers in the agency, and the content and structure of the encounter between staff and clients. The agencies defined very narrow and limited service goals, partly as a result of the resources available to them; these goal definitions have encouraged the development of a superficial service technology with few and routine intervention methods to change the employment status of the client; and these methods were reflected in the nature of the relations between staff and clients, which tended to be circumscribed, routinized, and insensitive to many attributes the clients presented. The analysis, therefore, also points to some of the changes that MPS needs to undergo in order to become more effective. Chapter 5 explores this topic.

5

New Operative Goals And Service Technology

Chapter 3 indicated some of the changes that need to occur in the relations between the agency and its external environment. These, as the preceding analysis has shown, must be accompanied by changes in the operative goals of MPS. Specifically, the agency must cease to see its function as a "broker" between job applicants and employers. Rather, it must pursue multiple comprehensive service goals for both clients and employers that will reinforce each other. The basic change strategy is to expand the operative goals of the agency with the aim, not only of improving its services, but also of increasing its importance in the community. The expansion of the agency's domain, as will be shown, should enable it to develop more viable relations with those external units that control important resources. The primary changes in goal orientation and commitment are directed mainly at clients and employers.

1. *Service goals for clients.* As a basic premise, the agency must undertake the responsibility for the provision of necessary resources that will enable clients to achieve their optimal employment poten-

tials. This fundamental mandate implies the following operational policies:

(a) The agency must develop or have access to multiple services that not only deal with the direct employment problems of the client, but also with employment-related problems.

(b) The agency must become a center that has control over and access to necessary client services so that the provision of these services is not dependent upon the ability of the client to negotiate for them, but rather on the client's need for them.

(c) The agency must be accountable for the client throughout the entire intervention process, up to the point at which the client shows enough strength to progress or maintain his status on his own in the labor market. It must, therefore, initiate and maintain active contact with him until that goal is achieved.

(d) The agency must develop diverse intervention strategies that are tailored to the various employment needs of its clients. The battery of services must be so designed that they are linked and coordinated and can be mobilized by staff when needed.

(e) The agency must become an advocate for the client vis-a-vis employers and other social service agencies, and must serve as his spokesman when needed.

2. *Service goals to the employer.* Fundamentally, MPS should provide employers with expert services to resolve many of their manpower recruitment, management, and development problems. Reference was made already to this important point in Chapter 3. To reiterate some of the policy implications of this principle:

(a) The agency must develop expert services in the design and application of instruments for accurate measurement of occupational aptitudes, analysis of tasks and skills required by various jobs, and assessment of vocational progress by employees.

(b) The agency needs to provide employers with services that will enable them to assess their labor needs and identify sources of labor recruitment.

(c) The agency should assist employers in the design of training programs for the development of their work force.

(d) The agency should develop management assistance services to aid employers in solving such problems as supervisor-worker relations, workers' morale, and workers' absenteeism.

The dual emphasis of MPS, as advocated here, may seem to be inherently contradictory in the sense that pursuit of the latter goal may lead to the displacement and gradual abdication of the former.

It could be argued that it is more prestigious for the agency to concentrate on developing services for employers and thus to neglect its services to clients, particularly since they may present far more complex and frustrating problems. Moreover, it is feasible that, in its efforts to develop employer services, the agency could subjugate its client service goals for that purpose. Undoubtedly these dangers do exist, and organizational mechanisms must be developed to prevent them. At the same time, it is essential to see why the agency must try to maximize the attainment of both objectives. Briefly, four reasons can be identified:

(a) The labor market is composed of job seekers and employers. Unless the agency develops important services for both groups, its ability to influence the labor market, which it must do in order to be effective, will be small.

(b) In order to serve its clients effectively, MPS must have significant influence over potential employers. Only through an offer of needed services can the agency expect to attain such a measure of influence.

(c) Through comprehensive services to clients the agency gains unique knowledge and experience that could be of vital importance for potential employers. Concomitantly, services to employers are the only means the agency has to obtain the necessary information on effective ways to serve clients. Concentrating on one party alone thus undermines the quality of services to that very party.

(d) Finally, by pursuing service goals for employers as well as clients, MPS could potentially attract staff with a high degree of expertise, who, in turn, could raise the quality of the staff in other sectors of the agency.

It is important, however, that the agency rank its service goals to clients as first priority, since ultimately it must be accountable to that population for whose benefit the agency was founded. This can be accomplished by providing greater rewards to those in the organization who pursue client service goals and by developing performance criteria based on the degree to which the agency contributed and helped clients to improve their status in the labor market. It is also feasible to develop two separate subsystems in MPS, each specializing in one of the goals, provided mechanisms for coordination and integration exist between them.

The framework of the service technologies which the agency must develop for its clients, based on the findings reported earlier, is the next topic. It is, of course, an ideal type and is based on the

notion that MPS must become a multiservice center which is highly accountable for and to its clients. The proposed model is designed to provide the necessary services at every critical juncture in the career of the client in the agency. An underlying assumption, not explicit in the model, is that agency service technologies for the disadvantaged worker must be structured so that they bring the client into an *actual* job or training situation as early as possible and that the activities of the agency must be based on concrete services that are perceived as *relevant* by the client himself. There is ample evidence to suggest that service technologies which delay the entry of the client into a job situation through testing, counseling, training designed to raise "motivation" or teach "basic work attitudes," etc. are likely to fail. Moreover, when the aim of such services is to demand changes in the person himself rather than in his environment and situation, MPS is going to have little impact on the employment situation of the hard-to-employ. Wellman (1968), who studied the failure of a federal government program designed to help lower-class youth find jobs, explains the failure:

> Their [the youths'] desire for work was not the problem. The real problem was what the program demanded of the young men. It asked them that they change their manner of speech and dress, that they ignore their lack of skills and society's lack of jobs, and that they act as if their arrest records were of no consequence in obtaining a job. It asked, most important, that they pretend *they*, and not society, bore the responsibility for their being unemployed.

A second underlying assumption is that the service technology will be operationalized by teams handling a small caseload of clients. The intensive nature of the proposed service technology necessitates that the staff concentrate their efforts on small groups of clients.

COMPONENTS OF THE PLACEMENT AGENCY SERVICE TECHNOLOGY

The proposed service technology of the agency (See Figure 2, page 60) can be considered a series of connected, sequential, intervention steps, indicating a course of agency action such that the outcome

of each step determines the content of the next.* The linkage between the various intervention steps are based on a system of rapid feedback, so that the agency constantly monitors the effects of any given action on its clients. The assessment of the feedback determines what future courses of action to follow. As discussed in Chapter 6, a basic obstacle in any effort to coordinate the services of the agency is the lack of an effective information system. The service technologies cannot achieve, therefore, any measure of effectiveness unless they develop on the basis of adequate, up-to-date information on the client.

1. *Initial assessment.* The function of the first phase of the service process is twofold: to determine the occupational potentials of the client, and to identify the problems encountered by the client that will impede his chances to engage in an employment enhancement program.

The assessment of the client's employment potentials must be based on a measurement of the actual skills he possesses, rather than on the results of some standardized tests, which may be totally irrelevant to the situation of the disadvantaged worker. Furthermore, the occupational interests of the client should be seen as the first and crucial motivating force in his desire to change his situation and, therefore, should not be disregarded or labeled as "unrealistic." In fact, the assessment process must be based on the full involvement of the client in every aspect of this phase. The client's perspective, definition of the situation, and aspirations must be accepted as starting points. Their rejection by the staff leads to the onset of distrust and disengagement by the client. The purpose of the occupational assessment process is to determine what actual and potential skills the client possesses; to identify those client attributes which must be taken as given and unchangeable, but which have important consequences for the type of jobs or training programs the client could undertake. (Among these attributes are age, sex, marital status, and physical handicaps.); and to assess the client's occupational attributes that could be improved through proper intervention.

The identification and assessment of employment-related problems experienced by the client is of the highest importance at this

* Although the steps are identified in a sequential order, the client need not follow them in that order. Rather, the order is determined by the needs of the client at any given moment, and steps may be repeated by him if necessary.

phase and is often the most neglected task in the agency. Very frequently the barriers to employment that the hard-to-employ experiences are due not only (or primarily) to lack of occupational skills or motivation, but rather to the overwhelming pressures of problems in other spheres of life. The hard-to-employ is often "disadvantaged" because his circumstances do not allow him to solve successfully many personal problems which affect his capacity and motivation to work. When employed, the pressures of such problems may undermine the stability and adequacy of his work performance. Health, financial, legal, day-care, transportation, and interpersonal problems may all be applicable. The major focus of the assessment process must be to determine what type of problems experienced by the client have *immediate* negative impact on his chances to be successfully employed. This process should direct MPS in determining what employment-related problems must be resolved to enable the client to solve his employment difficulties. Again, the involvement of the client's perspective on these problems in relation to his ability to work is essential.

The agency must, therefore, perceive and relate to the client beyond the question of his occupational role. Recognition that the occupational role of the individual is interwoven in a network of other roles is critical. These other roles influence the patterns in which the individual fulfills his occupational role. The agency, if it wishes to effectively alter the one role, must address itself to this network.

The initial assessment process also enables the agency to distinguish among the various needs of its clients. For example, the agency may divide its potential clients into four groups: (a) clients requiring assistance only in obtaining a job; (b) clients who need help in resolving some employment-related problems before a job referral; (c) clients who need an extensive process of training, on-the-job training, job placement, job coaching, etc., and (d) clients who require intensive intervention by the agency to resolve major employment and employment-related problems. Subsequent actions by the agency will vary according to the type of client seeking services.

2. *The planning of potential employment enhancement strategies.* On the basis of the initial assessment of the client's employment problems and potentials, plans can be developed with the client for a course of action. The purpose of such a plan is to map

out, in advance, the various steps MPS will undertake in attempting to improve the client's employment status. As the client completes each step, he can expect to move closer to his ultimate occupational objectives. Such a map requires the staff to specify concrete courses of action that are clearly interlinked and thus avoid the tendency to formulate plans that are vague and noncommittal, which leave the client with a strong sense of uncertainty. Put differently, the planning of intervention strategies must be based on the specification of a clear and concrete series of activities that can guide both the staff and the client. Such planning becomes a commitment on the part of the agency which can then serve as the criterion against which future actions by staff can be assessed.

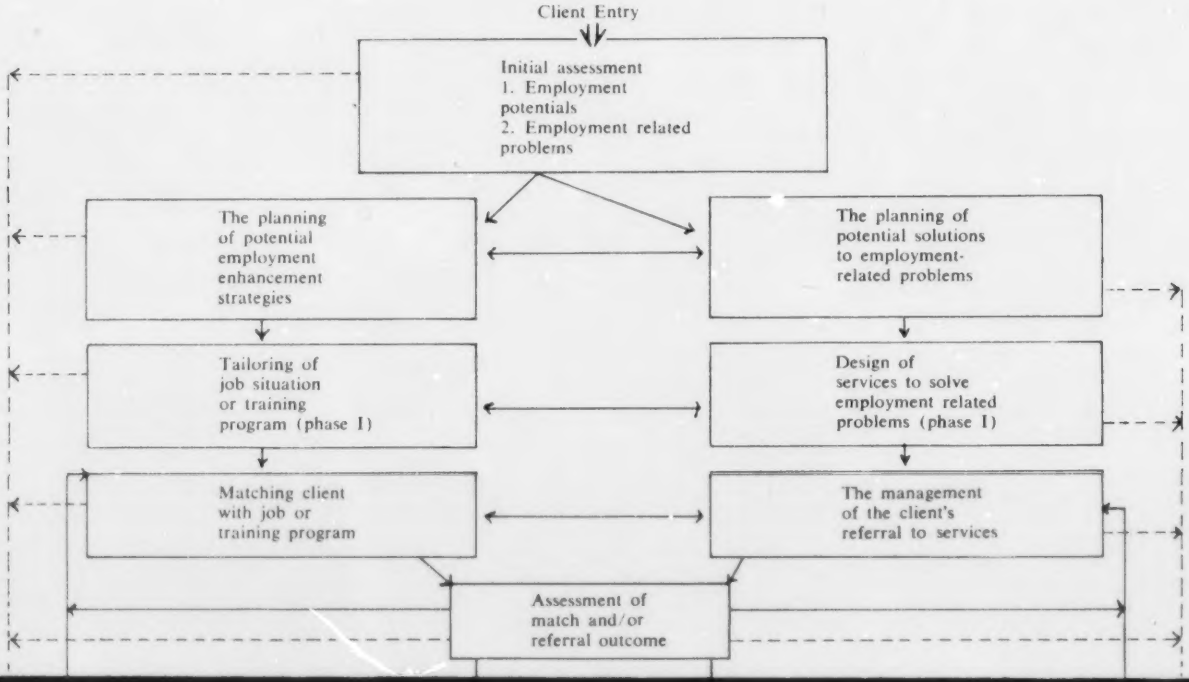
As suggested earlier, the plan must aim at introducing the client to an employment or job-training situation as soon as possible. It may be based on a series of activities expected to raise the skill level of the client, provide him with work experience, train him to a specific job, etc. Most important for the agency is that the plan provides the information for the job developer, the training placement worker, and other staff to prepare the necessary employment services needed by the client.

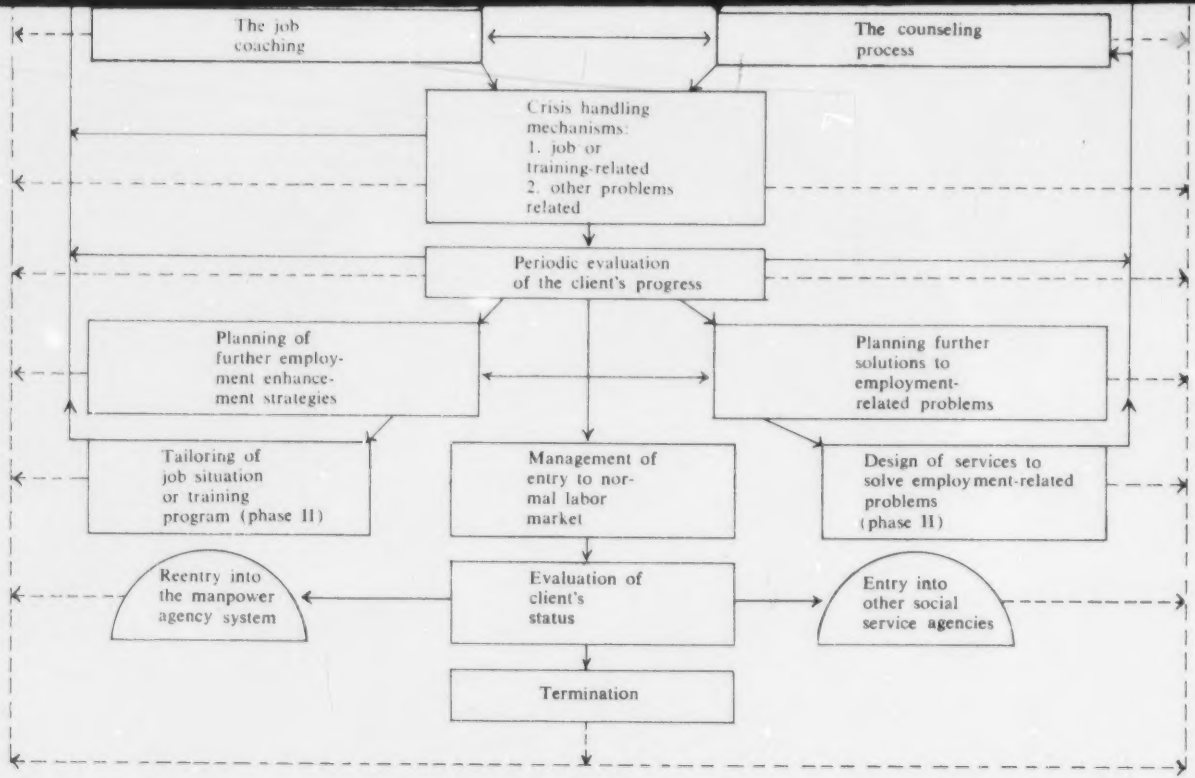
One of the dangers in the planning of employment enhancement strategies is that it may reflect organizational constraints and exigencies rather than the needs of the client. The planning process becomes constrained by the available employment resources in the agency at any given moment. Staff may suggest referrals to a training program or a job because they happen to be available at that time, not because they are likely to meet the needs of the client. Undoubtedly, staff must take into consideration the availability of resources in planning services to the client, but when this factor becomes predominant, no pressure will be built within the agency to seek the needed employment resources. Unless such a pressure is maintained and unless it stimulates organizational search activities for resources, the agency is in danger of neglecting the clients who may need its services the most and of becoming a passive, reactive organization. A key organizational mechanism to minimize this danger is to develop specialized organizational roles designed to actively seek the needed resources indicated by the intervention plans. These are called "boundary spanning" roles and will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

3. *Planning potential solutions to employment-related problems.*

Figure 2.

Schematic Presentation of the Proposed Manpower Agency Service Technology


Client Entry
Initial assessment
1. Employment potentials
2. Employment related problems
The planning of potential employment enhancement strategies
The planning of potential solutions to employment-related problems
Tailoring of job situation or training program (phase I)
Design of services to solve employment related problems (phase I)
Matching client with job or training program
The management of the client's referral to services
Assessment of match and/or referral outcome


The job coaching
The counseling process
Crisis handling mechanisms: 1. job or training-related 2. other problems related
Periodic evaluation of the client's progress
Planning of further employment enhancement strategies
Planning further solutions to employment-related problems
Tailoring of job situation or training program (phase II)
Management of entry to normal labor market
Design of services to solve employment-related problems (phase II)
Reentry into the manpower agency system
Evaluation of client's status
Entry into other social service agencies
Termination

The danger of ignoring client problems because no immediate organizational resources are available is most apparent in this area for two reasons. First, staff of the agency may perceive their service domain in terms that exclude reference and obligation to handle such problems. Second, the solution of employment-related problems requires staff to enlist the services of other social service agencies. This necessitates a great deal of initiative, persistence, and commitment to the client. If this plan is to work, staff must be committed to assisting the client with solving these problems, despite the difficulties involved.

The plan, in relating to the most pressing concerns presented by the client, needs to specify a list of concrete courses of action to direct the efforts of staff. This must be made in close reference to the employment plans that are simultaneously being drawn. The two plans are obviously interdependent since the solutions called for by the employment plans determine what employment-related problems are critical, and vice versa. For example, a referral of the client to a certain job may be contingent on the solution of a health, transportation, or day-care problem, while a referral to a training program may require the solution of some pressing financial or legal difficulties.

Although the plan may call upon various social service agencies, it also serves as an agreement that the staff will be responsible for obtaining such services and will maintain this responsibility if the client is referred to another agency. In short, the plan must commit the staff to becoming the client's advocates within the welfare arena.

4. *Tailoring of job situation or training program (Phase I).* The purpose of this step is to develop the first job situation or training program called for by the plan. Probably nowhere in the entire agency service technology is there any step as important as this one. It requires a radically different approach to matching the client with an employment resource than is currently operating in the agency. The role of the staff in this step is to actively search and negotiate with potential employers and training programs to develop a job or a training situation that fits the needs of the client. The job developer must know what client requirements must be met by a given job or training situation and *not* vice versa. It is apparent that the entire success of MPS may hinge on this process, since the greater the ability of the job developer to develop a job situation that meets the needs of the client, the greater the

probability of success. In this context it may be worthwhile to cite the example of occupational placement of disabled veterans in which major efforts were put into modifying the job situation so that the disability did not become an insurmountable barrier to employment.

The difficulties in tailoring a job or training situation vary, of course, with the prerequisites of the client, but, in many instances, they may not demand as many major changes in the job or training situation as may seem likely. Rather, the prerequisites may include such factors as hours of work, location, type of supervision, and work assignments, which may require only small adjustments in the job situation itself. In other instances greater organizational efforts must be exerted to obtain a suitable job situation. Either way, unless such a tailoring process takes place, the agency will remain no more than a labor exchange service. While for many clients such a service may be adequate, it is disastrous for the disadvantaged, since it offers no way of breaking the vicious cycle he is caught in. Tailoring a job situation to his needs is the most basic way in which this cycle can be broken.

The agency also functions to obtain up-to-date and relevant information about the job or training program. With such information, the agency can assess again the suitability of the employment resource to the client and, most important, how to best prepare and match the client with the job or training situation. Very frequently the information that the agency has about a job or a training program tends to be erroneous because it is dependent on partial and minimal information provided by the employer. The job developer, on the other hand, through his actual contact with the employer and job situation, can obtain far more reliable information.

It must be emphasized again that the underlying concept behind this step in the service technology is to develop job or training situations that are adaptable to the attributes of the client and are structured in a way that minimizes the potential negative consequences of the client's personal limitations.

5. *Design of services to solve employment-related problems.* Crucial to this step is the active search for those social services that could not only meet the needs of the client, but that will accept him in the first place. In a referral process it is usually left to the client to negotiate his own acceptance by the social service agency.

There must be, therefore, a systematic linkage between the efforts of the agency to serve the employment needs of the client and the efforts of other social service units to handle the employment-related problems he presents. It is the task of the agency to develop such linkages and negotiate for appropriate services on behalf of the client. The design process means, therefore, that agency staff must identify the social services that can handle the client's problem, arrange with the agency to accept the client for services, provide the necessary information to the agency's staff, and obtain the agency's commitment to respond favorably to the client's problem.

In assuming such a role, MPS becomes the client's advocate and spokesman. This indicates to the client a far greater organizational commitment to his general welfare, and, if such a commitment becomes translated into action, the influence of the agency on the client and its ability to direct him will increase significantly.

6. *Matching the client with a job or training program.* The matching process is the actualization of the design that was developed in the previous steps. It involves not only making the best choice from the alternatives that have been developed, but also forming the bridge between the client and the job or training situation. Such a bridge serves to ascertain that the client has in fact made his entry into the job or training situation and that the necessary conditions for the beginning of his new role are present.

It is frequently not realized by MPS that the actual confrontation between the client and the job or training situation can be extremely traumatic. It is a predicament that creates a great many uncertain expectations, particularly for the client. He enters a new situation in which he has no clear indication of how to function, in which he may apply inappropriate patterns of behavior, or in which his expectations may be at odds with the new reality. The task of the matching process is to help the client overcome this traumatic situation and to enable him to make his initial steps in the job or training situation. It may involve such activities as accompanying the client to the new job, introducing him to his supervisors, answering questions that arise, and handling final arrangements between the client and the employer. The degree of staff involvement and intervention in the matching process will depend, of course, on the assessed ability of the client to handle such a situation.

The matching process involves three parties: the client, the agency staff member, and the employer. The function of agency staff is to mediate between the client and employer, help the client accept the work situation, and help the employer accept the client as a worker. The events and information obtained in the matching process serve to indicate the client's chances to succeed, the possible tasks of the job coach, and the possibility of rematching the client with a different job.

7. *The management of the client's referral to services.* When such referrals are called for, MPS, in keeping with its function, must be the active agent in linking the client with the needed service. The agency staff need to make the necessary arrangements that will ensure that the client will actually arrive at the receiving agency, be accepted by the appropriate staff, and have his problem clearly identified.

It is an accepted fact that when a staff member accompanies the client to the social service unit the chances that the client will receive the appropriate services increase significantly. Similarly, when the client and the staff of the receiving agency are prepared for each other the chances of failure in their encounter decline. With the information they have on the client, staff can prepare the receiving agency to process the referred client in a manner that will improve the chances that the needed services will be provided, without the client having to undergo complex and time-consuming screening procedures.

Two latent, but important, functions are served by such an active referral management process. First, the agency staff obtains invaluable, firsthand, updated information about the service goals and technology of the social service agency and particularly about its client management procedures. Such information is critical for future referral attempts. Second, it affords an opportunity to develop a climate of exchange between the two agencies.

8. *Assessment of the matching and/or referral process.* The need for assessment at this stage in the service process cannot be overemphasized. With the matching of the client to a job or training situation and/or his referral to other services, an important juncture has been reached in the career of the client in the agency. This is also the point at which the client is taking his first steps in the employment situation and will, therefore, provide invaluable information about his ability to follow the organizational plans and

about the adequacy and suitability of the plans themselves. At this juncture, many of the real attributes of the client are being exposed. Typically at this stage, agency staff discover facts about the client and his situation that were not considered earlier. Here the first disappointments about the client's motivation and progress occur. When "failures" begin, agency staff often repeat solutions which have not succeeded in the past. It is not atypical to find that when a job match fails, agency staff tend to repeat a similar match, only to escalate the client's chances for failure.

The purpose of assessment, which involves the client himself, is to avoid such pitfalls and, when necessary, to redesign the entire plan or to develop a different job or training program for the client. The element of time is also important in this context. The assessment must occur shortly after the matching process has taken place so that immediate action can be taken before the client's problems escalate.

9. *The job coaching.* The function of job coaching is to help the client adjust to the new work situation and maintain it. Ferman (1969: 29-30) describes the activities of the job coach as follows: (1) maintaining contact on and off the job with the hard-to-employ client after *placement*:, (2) advising supervisors on handling of problems related to the hard-to-employ worker; (3) counseling workers and supervisors; and (4) providing for feedback of information on progress and success or failure of the client.

The coaching or training component of this role should also be emphasized. The coaching process attempts to help the client develop necessary work habits, to handle the job requirement, and to cope with daily problems that arise in the work situation. The job coach may also combine in his role the occupational or skill coaching itself, and it is plausible that only the combination of all these tasks in one person can make the job coach an effective change agent.

10. *The counseling process.* Client counseling in regard to employment-related problems is highly related to the functions of the job coach. Although the roles are separated here analytically, they may be combined in the same staff person. The counseling process must identify the problems that adversely affect the client's employment situation; provide advice to the client on handling the problems; intervene on behalf of the client when necessary, such as with social service agencies and police; counsel other family mem-

bers on how to assist the client as he copes with his problems; and provide information to the agency about the progress of the client.

11. *Crisis handling mechanisms.* The success of the agency staff as effective job coaches or counselors largely depends on their ability to mobilize resources to meet crisis situations in which the client may find himself, either on or off the job. Given the precarious and disadvantaged situation in which the hard-to-employ must function, emerging problems that could otherwise find quick solutions can easily become major crises, which could severely hamper the functioning of the worker. It could be that the relatively high frequency of such situations in the disadvantaged worker's life results in his inability to follow through on plans or to progress in his employment situation. The stoppage of work as a result of such problems as illness, legal difficulties, and disputes with employers are very frequent. The best of plans and job placement may fail when such crises erupt and are not coped with immediately. The agency must, therefore, develop appropriate mechanisms to handle such crises as they arise, before they bring about an irreversible setback and disruption in the client's employment situation.

In the job or training situation, crises may result from such problems as the worker's absence or tardiness, dispute with supervisor or fellow workers, inability or unwillingness to fulfill work norms, and display of inappropriate behavior on the job. These situations call for rapid intervention by the job coach or counselor and the deployment of various devices to cope with the situation. These may include the establishment of a "buddy system," advising supervisors on ways to reinforce the client's work discipline, negotiating and mediating between the client and his coworkers, and counseling the client on the consequences of his behavior.

Outside the job situation, problems such as illness, arrest, failure of transportation or day care arrangements, and financial hardship are all likely to lead the client into jeopardy in his employment situation. Intervention in these areas necessitates rapid mobilization of the needed services and, when necessary, informing the employer of the problem in order to minimize negative repercussions on his part.

In all these instances effective and rapid intervention requires "organizational slack," i.e., unused and uncommitted resources that can be mobilized quickly and without complicated procedures. These resources may be in the form of emergency health services,

funds for emergency loans, access to bail services, emergency day care facilities, etc. To use these resources, even when they are available, the agency staff must obtain quick feedback from the client about the problems he encounters. To do so, the agency staff must maintain close contact with him and assure his trust and willingness to report to them during a crisis situation. Such trust, can only be developed if there is a growing recognition among the clients of MPS that the agency is in fact willing and capable of responding to their problems.

12. *Periodic evaluation of the client's progress.* As is obvious from the description of the proposed framework of agency service technology so far, a basic element is continuous monitoring of the client's progress. The monitoring process is one of the underpinnings of the whole system, and it serves as a prime stimulus to organizational actions vis-a-vis the client. The periodic evaluation, however, is necessary in order to obtain a more total picture of the client from all the participants in the change efforts. During evaluation the relevant issues regarding the client's employment status are presented and interlinked. Only by obtaining a more comprehensive assessment of the client's status can the agency staff ascertain the degree to which their various activities on behalf of the client are congruent and responsive to his identified needs.

The evaluation, therefore, enables the different participants such as the counselor, job coach, job developer, the client's supervisor, and the client himself to present their assessments of the client's progress and to identify problem areas needing adjustment. The function of the periodic evaluation is not only to assess what has been done in the past, but also to establish the factual basis for future planning of organizational activities for the client. The periodic evaluation may point to needed changes in the employment situation, to serious training or educational deficiencies that must be overcome, to the need to resolve other employment-related problems, and the like. In short, this evaluation must generate the crucial information that is necessary for the planning of further employment enhancement strategies and other services for the client.

The subsequent phases or steps in the service technology are similar to those cited earlier. They indicate the spiral nature of the service technology, that is, the loops to previous steps in the technology, as depicted in Figure 2, do not indicate repetition of

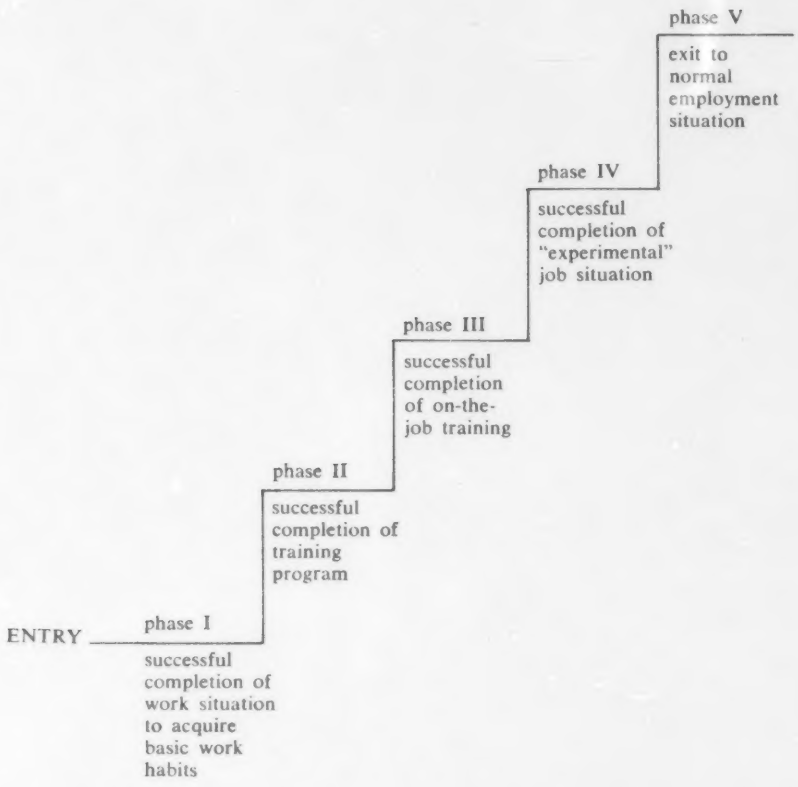
previous strategies, but rather the development of new intervention methods based on *previous* experiences in assisting the client. For example, the need to develop a different job or training situation for the client will probably arise, as the existing one may not have brought the desired results. The new efforts are based on the experience gained thus far, and hopefully this will diminish the chances of subsequent failure.

The service technology, as depicted in Figure 2, follows a step-wise pattern. The ultimate goal, obviously, is to enable the client to achieve a better employment status in the normal labor market than he had at point of entry. To achieve this, the client may have to repeat this series of steps several times, although the specific content of each step will vary (see Figure 3). This process underlines the need for ongoing agency accountability in order to assist the client in his entry into a stable and improved employment situation. Two fundamental points are indicated by the step-wise model. First, MPS must develop plans and strategies that will bring the client through a series of successive approximations leading to the ultimate goal of full employment. Second, the agency must remain responsible to the client even when he is successfully placed in a job or training situation (only a step toward the ultimate objective). MPS should not await the return of the client after he has completed (or dropped) a given training program, but rather follow him throughout the entire process.

Figure 3 does not ignore the fact that clients may fail or drop out at any given step in the service technology. It acknowledges the possibility that there may be groups of clients whom MPS cannot effectively assist, for reasons embedded in the clients themselves or in the organization and structure of the agency's services. Yet the purpose of this framework is to minimize such failures through several mechanisms: (a) the expansion of the services offered by MPS, (b) the design of the services around the needs and attributes of the client, (c) the close interaction between staff and client, (d) the continuous monitoring of the client's progress, and (e) the rapid response of the agency to client's problems. Above all, the model emphasizes the need to repeat steps that have failed to achieve the desired objective by developing new solutions on the basis of the experience gained. It is expected, therefore, that the use of this model will prevent the tendency of MPS to develop routine procedures in handling its clients and encourage instead the

Figure 3.

An Example of a Stepwise Model of a Client's Progress Through Manpower Placement Services



adoption of a nonroutine service system that is motivated by a constant search for new solutions.

Finally, we should point out that the proposed model for placement service technology is intermeshed with an information and follow up system. Every juncture in the career of the client becomes also a point at which crucial information about him is obtained, processed, and analyzed and serves as the basis for subsequent decision-making. Moreover, each of these junctures also represents

a point at which the client is routed in some critical direction, or where he may leave the system completely. In either case, MPS must have a follow up component at each of these junctures to ascertain whether the client has reached his destination; whether he withdrew from the agency, and, if so, why; and whether he can be relinked to the agency.

Given the requirements of the service technology, it should be abundantly clear that this system cannot function properly without an effective and efficient information and follow up mechanism. A follow up system should provide the information necessary to make future decisions about the client and the information to assess the consequences of the actions taken by staff. Without valid and reliable information in both areas, the service technology of MPS has hardly a chance to achieve any acceptable level of effectiveness. This system will be discussed in the next chapter.

6

An Intelligence System

There is a strong correlation between the vitality and adaptability of an organization and the effectiveness and efficiency of its intelligence system. The intelligence system enables the organization to evaluate its own activities and become aware of the changes and developments occurring in its relevant environment. Without such an active process of learning, the progress of the agency is likely to be halted, and it may find that its services and modes of operation are rapidly becoming obsolete. The mere existence of an intelligence system obviously does not guarantee greater organizational adaptability; the system must be efficient and effective and it must be *used* in the agency's decision-making processes. Without radical improvements in the feedback mechanisms of MPS, other organizational innovations, such as those proposed in previous chapters, are likely to be short lived.

In general, an intelligence system fulfills three related functions. It monitors the external relevant environment of the agency, provides an internal audit of staff and client activities, and evaluates the agency's outputs.

The monitoring of the agency's external environment is intended, first of all, to alert the agency to important changes and developments in the various units upon which it is dependent. These include suppliers of jobs and training opportunities, social service agencies, and legislation. Secondly, such a check also attempts to identify new developments in manpower placement methods and other client service techniques. External observation is also required to inform the agency of changes in the character of the client population.

The main purpose of an internal audit is to monitor the activities of the staff vis-à-vis the clients and the careers of the clients within the agency. The information generated by internal auditing enables staff to assess the progress of the clients and to determine future courses of action. The management of the agency uses the same information to evaluate the operation of the service technology.

Obviously, service outputs must be evaluated in order to determine whether the agency is achieving its service goals at some reasonable level of success. The principal aim of this process is to determine what happened to clients after they had been served by the agency.

The fulfillment of the above functions requires the following intelligence activities:

1. Collection of the necessary data;
2. Analysis of data so that it becomes meaningful information;
3. Transmission of the information to relevant decision-makers;
4. Interpretation of the information in order to generate knowledge.*

Malfunction in any of the steps is likely to adversely affect the capability of the system to develop knowledge. One of the most revolutionary mechanisms to assist the intelligence system to efficiently and effectively achieve its goal has been the use of computers and electronic data processing (EDP). One cannot underestimate the tremendous impact of EDP in revolutionizing the character of information systems and management decision-making and control processes. Briefly, the new information technology enables the agency to:

1. Collect information in a rapid and systematic manner;

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* A distinction is being made between data, information, and knowledge. Data are cues received from the objects monitored. Information is the organization of the cues in meaningful ways. Knowledge is the interpretation given to the information.

2. Broaden the scope of each decision by increasing the range of alternatives explored and the speed of exploration;

3. Monitor systematically the actions that follow the decisions; and

4. Assess the outcomes of a decision rapidly and shorten the planning period (Whisler and Shultz, 1960).

There is no doubt that with appropriate use of EDP the potential for rationalizing the activities of the agency can be vastly improved.* A discussion follows on exploration of the nature of the intelligence system currently found in MPS, the changes it needs to undergo in order to become more effective, and the potential uses of electronic data processing (EDP) in upgrading such a system.

MONITORING THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE MANPOWER PLACEMENT AGENCY

MPS has been characterized as a "people processing" organization whose primary function is to enlist external resources that will meet the needs of its clients. It should be emphasized again that the agency depends fundamentally on outside employment resources and social services, which must be mobilized at every step in the process of changing the client's employment status. The very core activities of agency staff involve continuous transactions, therefore, with external units. These transactions are with suppliers of jobs and training opportunities (i.e., employers, training programs) and social service agencies (i.e., health facilities, day care centers, welfare departments, law enforcement agencies). In each case the agency staff attempt to find and develop an appropriate resource for the client and link him to it in a manner that will ensure a successful response to the client's needs. A basic prerequisite for an effective "matching" process is a thorough knowledge of these resources in terms of their existence and availability, the nature of the services they provide, and the criteria they set for the recepient of clients. Such knowledge can only be produced by an effective external monitoring and search system. Such a system also enables MPS to reduce the uncertainty involved in using external resources, and to minimize their haphazard utilization. Put

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* For a more detailed discussion on EDP, its development, and applications, see Rosove (1967).

differently, one way the agency can gain some measure of control and mastery over its environment is by developing an intelligence system that provides up-to-date information and can search out the largest number of alternative resources that might be used. Needless to say, the larger the number of alternatives available to staff, the greater their independence from the environment in making decisions for their clients.

Currently, however, agencies tend to have rather passive and ineffective external monitoring systems of occupational resources and social services. MPS typically receives information about job openings through three channels: employer calls to the agency, contact of job developers with employers, and contacts of agency employment interviewers with potential employers. With the exception of the third channel, much of the information received tends to be partial, incomplete, and occasionally invalid. Staff find that critical items of information such as level of education required, health conditions, etc., are unavailable. The most detrimental aspect of such a system is the fact that a significant proportion of the job orders are closed by the time they are received by the employment interviewers. Such difficulties stem from the fact that agency staff who actually attempt the matching process of clients with jobs are usually removed from the source of information, i.e., potential employers. Nor do they have close contact with the job developers who might have access to the relevant information. In addition, there is a lack of update mechanisms to augment rapidly the information available about a given job. For example, staff may find out that a job order has been closed only after sending a client to the employer or they may discover additional qualification requirements only after calling the employer prior to client referral.

An even more serious situation exists with regard to the potential utilization of various social service agencies. When such referrals do occur, they are based on personal staff contacts and on ad hoc information received from other staff members (and clients). Reliance on informal channels tends to constrain the amount of information available to staff in making referral decisions and to endanger its validity and reliability.

The costs of inadequate monitoring and search of external resources are quite obvious. To note a few:

1. Mismatching of clients with employment resources increases considerably.

2. The effectiveness of the decision-making processes in relation to offering specific services to clients is reduced.

3. There is a significant underutilization of potential resources.

One of the chief mechanisms to develop a more effective external monitoring system is through the establishment of "boundary spanning" roles. The major function of these roles is to maintain close ties with external units and to actively search the environment for new resources. Staff members assuming such roles develop working relations with a given set of external units such as employers in a certain industry or agencies in a given social service field. These "contact men," as they are often called, gather essential information about resources and transmit the information to interested staff members. The contact men are also constantly searching for new resources in their field and keep the agency up to date on changes and developments in the existing resources. They serve, therefore, as vital links between critical segments of the external environment and the agency. The job developer or job coach, who is closely attached to the agency, often serves in this capacity. The boundary spanning roles serve as the sensors of the agency vis-á-vis its environment and the channels through which information about the environment is transmitted to the agency. A contact person's expertise is often a major determinant of the agency's ability to acquire knowledge of external resources. Such performance must be based on the following criteria:

1. The contact person must develop expert knowledge about the resources in his area of specialization.

2. He must be able to develop cooperative and informative relationships with the major suppliers of these resources.

3. The contact person needs to develop highly sophisticated search techniques for new resources.

4. He must develop analytic skills and tools to assess and evaluate developments and changes in the nature of the resources.

5. The contact person must constantly update and validate the information available to MPS on external resources.

6. He must acquire effective and efficient communication channels to the agency.

The last three objectives can be greatly facilitated by the use of computers and electronic data processing. The computer and EDP provide highly efficient, accurate, and extremely rapid ways of storing the information acquired; updating it; categorizing, classifying, and analyzing the information; and retrieving it when needed.

The use of EDP for such purposes is illustrated by computerized job banks and community resources inventory.

A computerized job bank operates on the principle that every job order that is developed or received by MPS is stored in a standard format in the computer. This format is actually a uniform list of information about the job that must accompany every order. This information may include type of job, level of skills required, age range, health restrictions, location, hours of work, and availability of training. As the job orders are stored in the computer, their various requirements form a standard matrix of job classes. The matrix is schematically presented in Figure 4. In the matrix the numbers represent different classes of jobs, while the letters represent different qualification requirements. In such a format every new item of information about a job order can be rapidly transmitted to the computer (potentially in a matter of milliseconds) and be stored there. The computer itself sorts, classifies, and categorizes the job orders according to matrix requirements. It should be noted in this context that the use of the computer enables the storage of a vast amount of information about each job order that could never be done manually. Once stored, the computer,

Figure 4.

Schematic Presentation of Job Bank Matrix

Attributes and qualifications for jobs	Job Classes 1	2	3	4	5
A					
B					
C					
D					
E					
F					

upon command, can very rapidly search out any class of jobs with a given set of qualifications or attributes. (We shall later see the importance of this facility in matching clients with jobs.)

The enormous capabilities of a computerized job bank for analyzing what occurs in the job market must be emphasized. The agency can very rapidly find out what types of jobs it is receiving and from what industries. It can determine accurately what job orders have the attributes that will facilitate the placement of its clients. It can further ascertain what types of job orders it needs to seek and develop. In short, such an analysis can direct the energies of the agency to those areas that will give the greatest payoff in terms of obtaining necessary employment resources and alert it to new developments which may pose dangers or provide opportunities to the agency.

A computerized job bank also enables the staff of MPS to gain rapid access to such information. Either through computer printouts or terminals, staff can obtain up-to-date information about available job orders and can scan rapidly the entire set of job orders in the bank. The computer can overcome many information barriers like location, time, and personnel. The use of the computerized job bank, therefore, opens up a far greater range of employment resources for staff to consider than was ever possible before, and potentially staff could become far less dependent on a few known resources. Such a system can be updated at an amazing speed. For example, when a job order is closed, this information can be sent to the computer through a terminal, and in a matter of seconds that bit of information is available to every staff member of the agency who has access to the job bank.

In a similar fashion, the agency could develop a computerized inventory of social services which includes information on the service provided, eligibility criteria, procedures of referrals, and persons to contact. New information about a given welfare service can be rapidly stored at the computer, replacing obsolete information, hence keeping the resource inventory up-to-date. Similarly, experience gained from referring clients can be easily added to the information already available. Such a system will again be under the control of contact persons specializing in obtaining information about social services. When the computerized inventory is then made available to staff, it will open the possibility of using a far greater range of resources than they could learn about through

personal experience. Moreover, the information provided will be more valid and reliable, reducing the risks of misreferrals.

Finally, we need to point to a set of boundary spanning roles that are of critical importance to MPS, yet often are highly neglected. These roles function to monitor the development of new knowledge about client service procedures particularly in employment placement techniques. The fields of vocational testing and guidance, training and coaching, job analysis, forecasting labor market development, optimization of man-job matching, etc., are in a constant state of development and progress. Unless the agency updates itself in those relevant areas, it will find its service technologies to be obsolete. It is remarkable, therefore, to note how few resources are directed toward research and development and staff development. It can be stated unequivocally that the effectiveness of MPS will also be a function of its ability to update the knowledge base of its service technology. It is essential that the agency develop systematic ties with knowledge-producing organizations such as universities and research institutes. It is equally important that the agency allocate resources and staff for internal research, staff development, demonstration projects, and experimentation in new service delivery patterns.

INTERNAL AUDITING AND CONTROL

The concept of internal auditing, as used in this context, does not refer merely to a system of control and to supervision of staff. It also encompasses the entire informational foundation that enables staff to carry out their activities on a rational basis. Such internal auditing and control refers to two levels of organizational performance: the case or client level, and the operational or departmental level.

1. *The case or client service level.* The function of the internal auditing at this level is to provide staff with all necessary information for decision-making at every juncture of the client's career in the agency. That is, the agency must develop an information system that collects, analyzes, and disseminates appropriate information at every important stage of the service process. The information system at this level is organized around the flow of the service decisions made by staff. The flow is composed of a series of linked decision junctures such as the determination of employment

status, assessment of employment-related problems, job matching, patterns of job coaching, and evaluation of the client's progress. For each of these decision junctures the information system needs to:

(a) Supply the relevant input of information to the decision maker;

(b) Facilitate the decision-making process itself through presentation of the alternatives, analysis of the information, etc.

(c) Record the decision itself; and

(d) Record the consequences of the decision on the client's progress.

It is clear that without such a system the service technology of MPS cannot be operated in a rational manner. The interaction between the service technology and the information system is depicted in Figure 2.

As currently structured, the information systems available in the agencies do not meet the above prerequisites. Information on the client is collected haphazardly, often with no apparent relevance to service decisions that need to be made. Actions taken by staff are not recorded systematically and there is hardly any methodical collection of data on the consequences of such actions, except for such gross designations as "client was not hired," or "hired but later left," etc. When a team of staff work with the client, there is often lack of continuity in the information that each member obtains, let alone any effective communication among staff of such information. When the record system of the agencies studied for this report were examined, one was impressed by the scant amount of information available, by the lack of internal consistency, by the lack of any follow-up information on actions taken, and by the lack of a pool of information on the same client. The consequences of information deficits like this on client service are quite apparent. For example:

(a) Staff made decisions about clients on the basis of inadequate information and therefore risked making erroneous decisions;

(b) Staff could not know the consequences of their decisions adequately. They might not know why the client failed to obtain a given job or why he was fired. There was no way that they could evaluate their actions and improve their decisions. Often staff undertook the same courses of action that had failed in the past;

(c) Staff found that they needed to obtain the same information again and again from the client because it was not recorded prop-

erly, was seldom updated, and was quite discontinuous. The lack of uniformity and consistency in the bits of information collected prevented staff from obtaining a comprehensible picture of the client.

(d) Supervisory staff lacked an adequate informational basis upon which they could assess the performance of their staff, and could not assist them in developing better techniques to serve their clients.

To develop a more effective and efficient internal auditing system, the agency needs to engage in a careful analysis of the decisional components of each stage in the service technology. It must identify the range and content of the decisions staff members need to make at each juncture (see Figure 2). In so doing, the informational requirements for effective decision-making can be explicitly identified, as can the information that needs to be transmitted to decision-makers at subsequent service junctures. Once information needs are identified, a scheme must be developed for the uniform classification and codification of the information items to be used, and procedures for information gathering, update, and retrieval must be planned. Such a process requires that the basic information the agency plans to collect and use be classified and coded in a system of categories that are explicitly defined, unambiguous, and uniformly applied throughout the entire agency.

The advantages to the agency of a computerized client record system are manifold. First, this method insures that all the necessary information on the client is collected, stored, and classified in standardized, uniform, and explicit categories. The computerized file will enable very rapid update of such information. Secondly, such a system, when properly programmed, will ensure proper distribution of all the necessary information about the client needed for decision-making. A staff member's own decisions and actions about the client will then be stored in the file for future reference. Finally, decisions and actions taken by other units in the agency for the client will be stored in the computerized file and thus be available to staff when needed.

The computerized client's file can serve as a powerful tool in the process of matching the client with appropriate employment resources or other social services. This is done through the comparison of the client's file with the computerized job bank, for example. The employment interviewer who needs to match the client with a job signals the computer what items of information

about the client must be matched with a given job. Such items can be age, location, level of education, need for on-the-job training, class of jobs desired, etc. The computer then reaches the job bank and lists all the jobs that meet the needs and qualifications of the client within a specified range. The employment interviewer can choose the best alternative available (Leiman, 1965). A computerized matching process could avoid many of the pitfalls of manual matching.

(a) It can handle far greater amounts of necessary information about the client needed for the matching process;

(b) It can scan a large volume of job orders in the job bank which cannot be done manually;

(c) The matching process itself is far more rational and accurate.

The above is not intended to undervalue the importance of the human judgment in the process, but to facilitate staff decisions.

2. *Operations level.* By auditing operations level we refer to the assessment of groups of operations or activities that cut across individual clients or staff. For example, these may include the analysis of all the activities done for clients with a given employment background; the success of job coaching, or counseling; analysis of the success rates of various job referrals; and the responses of staff to clients who drop out. In other words, auditing at operations level attempts to answer basic managerial questions about the modes of agency operation as a whole. The results of such auditing enables the agency to evaluate its operating policies and the effectiveness and efficiency of various operations and activities.

The specific purposes of such auditing include:

(a) Evaluation of the types of client arriving at the agency, the range of problems they present, and the services they request;

(b) Assessment of the services given to different cohorts of clients and their consequences; (These may include, for example, evaluation of whether clients needing training were actually referred to appropriate training programs; whether there are cohorts of clients with needs for which no adequate services are available, whether clients are properly matched with jobs, or whether adequate follow-up is done by staff.)

(c) Assessment of staff performance in terms of size of case load, average number of contacts with clients, type of resources or intervention techniques used, etc.

It is inconceivable that effective auditing of operations levels could be carried out without a computerized client record system, for such auditing necessitates the analysis of *aggregate* data that is uniformly recorded and available. Without a computerized system the costs of information retrieval from hundreds of client files becomes prohibitive. Nevertheless, without such auditing the agency lacks the basic tools for improving operating policies. It will be unable to determine whether the operations that compose its service technology are properly implemented, let alone whether they are effective.

EVALUATION OF OUTPUT OR SERVICE OUTCOMES

The final, and perhaps most important, function of the intelligence system is to enable MPS to evaluate its service outcomes. In the final analysis, the agency can only justify its existence and enhance its position if it can show competence in attaining service objectives. To do so, it must develop reliable procedures to evaluate the consequences of its services. The problems involved in attempting to measure outcomes in agencies are extremely complex. They stem from the fact that there is neither a consensus regarding a norm of "success," nor valid and reliable methods to measure it. Consider, for example, the issue of whether placement of a person in any job should be considered a "success" and whether a measure of success based on 60 consecutive work days on that job is valid and reliable. In many instances such a definition and measure of success may prove inadequate and arbitrary.

Setting a certain measure for desired outcomes may result in unanticipated and undesirable consequences. Such is the case when getting one client a job becomes the measure of success. When this criterion is adopted, staff tend to gear their efforts to obtain a high ratio of clients hired per clients referred. However, as a result of adopting such a criterion, staff begin to prefer those clients who have a high probability of being hired. Clients who are considered "bad risks" are likely to be "cooled out" through lack of attention, referral to counseling, referral to other agencies, and the like. Similar unanticipated consequences may occur with the adoption of other evaluation criteria, and the agency must carefully consider their potential implications. In particular, it must make a distinction between criteria for measuring the performance of staff

and criteria for measuring the performance of the agency as a whole.

Another risk involved in developing evaluative criteria is the tendency of the agency to adopt symbolic criteria when faced with the difficulties of developing substantive criteria. Symbolic evaluation refers to procedures that are based on testimonies by staff or clients, display of the "successful" client, self-evaluation, and the like. It is easy to see that the use of such procedures may be highly misleading and, in fact, could cover up serious failures by the organization.

There is no doubt that evaluation of such organizations as MPS is "painful" in the sense that it is likely to expose serious gaps between expectation and actual accomplishment. Moreover, the executive leadership of the agency may be concerned (on some occasions justifiably so) that such an exposure may undermine the legitimacy of the agency. Yet such thinking results in a vicious cycle in which the agency cannot improve its services for lack of adequate outcome measures, which in turn increase the fear of such measures. It must be realized, however, that in the long run lack of adequate outcome measures leads to the deterioration of the organization. A prerequisite to the development of such measures is a strong commitment by the executive leadership.

The design of valid and reliable measures of outcome has to recognize the fact that the service goals of the agency are multidimensional, and consist of various subgoals and tasks. The measures need to relate to the goals of each subsystem and to the relationship among them. In this context it is recognized that multiple measures must be developed addressing themselves to various service objectives pursued by staff. The guiding principle must be the concept of measuring the *differences* between the initial state of the client at the point of entry and the terminal state of the client at point of exit from the agency, using the same set of variables to measure both states. The client initially goes through a series of assessments that are often updated and corrected with the collection of additional information. These assessments may cover a range of attributes and problems, such as the client's occupational skills, motivation to work, health, and financial problems. These present the gamut of areas in which the agency actively plans to intervene in order to improve the status of the client. At point of exit these same attributes are reassessed and the amount of progress shown by the client through actual per-

formance or his own evaluation is recorded for each attribute. It is only through the comparison between the two sets of measures that the outcomes of the services can be evaluated. It follows, therefore, that the agency may have succeeded in some areas and not in others. Clearly, one general or even specific measure cannot express or summarize such a wide range of activities, nor can it reflect the complexity of attributes and problems presented by the client.

The development of multidimensional measures of outcome can succeed only when they are behaviorally specific, i.e., when they refer to very concrete and measurable client attributes. Moreover, these measures must become an integral part of the service technology itself, so that they serve to assess the client's progress at every stage of his career in the agency. They are, hence, embedded in the actual daily work of the staff and are not external measures imposed on the agency without direct reference to its actual function. Needless to say, such measures must be constantly examined, updated, and refined to reflect changes in the service technology.

The successful use of service outcome measurement necessitates a comprehensive and effective follow up system so that the information necessary for evaluation can be obtained. The basic function of follow up is to gather the necessary information regarding the consequences of the services given on the client. The service technology itself cannot be functional unless a follow up component is attached to each major phase of the service process.

Undoubtedly, the follow up of clients, as such, requires a large expenditure of organizational resources and tends to be a very costly operation. Partly, this is due to the fact that the follow up process is highly dependent on the cooperation of the client in terms of his willingness to maintain ties with the agency. Clients, however, are mobile and not necessarily interested in keeping the agency informed about their relations with employers, experiences in job situations, failures to meet employment requirements, etc. The agency is more likely to obtain information from those clients who experience crises and approach the agency for help. Such a self-selection process inevitably leads to serious distortions in the information available to the agency and could not, therefore, serve as a basis for evaluation.

Despite all these and other difficulties, the agency must develop an effective follow up system if it seriously intends to fulfill its service goals. If the record is to be accurate, *all* clients must be

followed up, although the format would differ according to the status of each client. It should be pointed out that the costs of follow up tend to decline as the contact of staff with clients becomes more intensive and as client perception of the agency becomes more positive. Put differently, the more the clients feel that the staff of the agency do, in fact, care about them and their fate, the more likely it is that they will maintain contact with the agency.

The above proposition when combined with the idea that follow up is an integral part of the service technology leads to the following conclusion: The tasks of the follow up process must be an integral part of the role performance of every staff person who makes decisions that affect the client. In other words, it becomes the task of each decision-maker to determine the consequences of his own decisions. The advantages of such a procedure are:

1. The tasks of follow up are shared by most members of the agency;
2. The staff person who is engaged in following up his clients knows more specifically what type of information he needs;
3. The staff person receives direct feedback on his own actions; and
4. The follow up becomes another component that could enhance the relations between the staff person and the client, since it indicates to the client that the staff person is, in fact, concerned about him.

In contrast, when follow up activities are delegated to specific roles or units in the agency, major informational discontinuities are likely to occur. The follow-up person is not certain what information he needs to obtain; he has had no previous contact with the client, and he often does not know what to report back and to whom. We suggest a model that is often termed "follow through," in which each staff person who makes a decision about the client follows through with the client to see to it that the decision has been implemented and, if not, why. Follow up activities, therefore, should also involve contacts with the employers, social service agencies, and other relevant organizations.

To ensure that follow up does become an integral part of the staff's role performance, the agency needs to evaluate and reward the staff person on performance of such a task. When the agency's reward structure reinforces this activity, it will receive high priority in the staff role performance. It will be necessary to adjust staff

roles so that time is available for follow up activities, perhaps by shifting administrative and clerical duties to other staff members. Moreover, the emphasis on follow up necessitates that these staff members become far more mobile, unrestricted by rigid office requirements. They should be able, for example, to visit the client either on the job or at home.

The information gathered through follow up activities provides a measurement of service outcomes. It must be transformed into measurable indices that can then be compared with the values of the same indices at the initial state of the client. That is, the follow up cannot remain on an impressionistic level, but must be based on reliable and valid assessment instruments.

Finally, it should be pointed out that MPS tends to overlook the importance of the intelligence system and, consequently, allocates meager resources to maintain it. As indicated in this chapter, a viable and effective intelligence system is one of the chief mechanisms by which the agency can grow and develop, improve the quality of its services and thus its prestige, and avoid obsolescence.

7

Summary And Conclusions

The basic aim of this report is to suggest a strategic framework for the transformation of manpower placement services from a reactive, precarious organization into an active and vital service delivery system. Two basic premises guided the development of this framework:

1. The placement service is a complex system shaped by the manpower resources it obtains from the environment, by service techniques developed within the agency, and by environmental constraints on the placement of clients in the labor market.

2. The effectiveness of MPS is dependent upon its ability to develop a multilevel service delivery system that breaks away from the narrow conception of matching persons with jobs.

Analyzing the main characteristics of MPS from a systems perspective, the following policy-related conclusions were derived:

1. MPS is highly dependent on external resources whose characteristics greatly influence the nature of its services to clients. The agency must, therefore, develop bases of power that will enable it to negotiate favorable exchanges with those who control these

resources, i.e., employment opportunities. The development of such bases of power must, first of all, come from a greater commitment of national resources to the agency. Concomitantly, however, MPS should develop expert services that are highly sought by potential employers. These may include services to the workers themselves, recruitment and testing of employees, analysis of job qualifications, and consultation on supervisor-worker relations.

2. The development of new bases of power must be accompanied by important changes in the service goals of the agency in the direction of expansion of its domain and mandate. First, the agency needs to assume far greater accountability for its clients by responding not only to their employment needs, but also to their employment-related problems. It must actively serve the client through all the necessary steps that can lead to a significant improvement of his employment status. Second, MPS must expand its goals to provide for employer needs, such as expert consultation on various labor recruitment, management, and development problems.

3. The service technology of the agency must be based on the principle of creating and shaping employment and training resources to the needs of the client rather than the reverse. Furthermore, the service technology should be organized around a "stepwise" intervention process in which the ultimate service goal is broken down into a series of connected intervention steps. The agency helps the client advance from one objective to the next, maintaining responsibility for him until the ultimate goals are attained. This necessitates close and intensive interaction between staff and clients throughout the entire service process.

4. The ability of MPS to achieve the above objective depends on the development of a highly effective and efficient intelligence system. The functions of such a system are to search and monitor the external environment in order to improve the control of the agency over needed resources; to internally audit the operations of the service technology and ensure that these are carried out appropriately and rationally; and to measure and evaluate the outcomes of the services given in order to enhance agency effectiveness. To develop an effective intelligence system the agency needs to have access to electronic data processing.

In order to change and become an innovative organization, MPS must have effective executive leadership. The executives of the agency must be persons who are highly committed to the

clients of the agency, who are willing to risk new experiments and changes, and who are, above all, creative yet rational planners. Even with the best of talent, however, the effectiveness of the agency is closely tied to the objective conditions of the economy in general and the labor market in particular. In the final analysis, the effectiveness of manpower placement services is predicated upon a national commitment to obtain full employment.

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